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北京青年报
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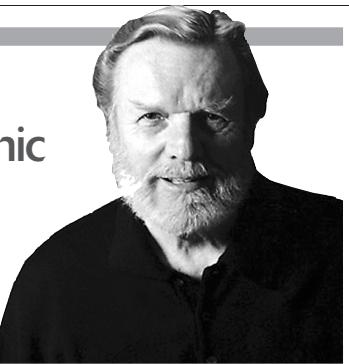


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Softer focus on reality

Zhang Yuan has been written into Chinese film lore as an icon among the Sixth Generation directors who have built their reputations underground. All his works show the cruel side of the world. "When we film, the camera never starts recording until I have convinced myself the scene can happen in real life," Zhang said. His latest film, *Dada's Dance*, is such a story: it contains sensitive elements such as single parenthood, sexual harassment and murder. Through Zhang's lens, the film ends up as a cross between *Carmen* and *The Odyssey*, but told in a calmer way. A whiskey glass in hand, Zhang talked with *Beijing Today* about the film and professional growth.

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New postal law causes worry of monopoly

By Zhao Hongyi

The new postal law, which give the State's China Post a monopoly on small-item express services, is provoking worry and uncertainty among service providers and users.

The new postal law, passed August 27, states that express services on small items, including packages less than 50 grams mailed within the city and 100 grams between cities, can only be handled by China Post. The new law is slated for implementation on October 1.

Over the past decade, private express services have seen great growth in China, particularly in big cities like Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou, where the services have great demand.

A private company requires only 5 yuan for delivery of a small item (less than 50 grams) within Fourth Ring Road in Beijing and 15 yuan for packages of up to 500 grams between cities, while China Post charges 12 yuan and 20 yuan, respectively, according to Liu Zhenyun, manager of an insurance company in Beijing.

The change can also affect



Public questions whether China Post is becoming a monopoly. CFP Photo

online vendors, who usually sell small items.

"If the new law was seriously implemented, we might require online buyers to purchase more if they need express service," said Liang Yanli of Taobao.com, the country's biggest online shopping center.

But industry professionals have asked media and service users to calm down. "The final price structure has not been drawn up yet," Cui Zhongfu, secretary-general of the China Federation of Logistic & Purchasing, told *Beijing Evening News*.

The final prices, according to Cui, will be finalized by a number of supervising ministries like the Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Commerce and National Commission for Development and Reform. "It also needs a national public hearing," Cui said.

Cui expects the final prices will be much closer to current market prices.

Most of the private express service providers are trying to calm down their clients as well, saying everything will be the same after the national holiday.

Xiong Xingming, vice president of ZJS Express Beijing, said China Post still needs to clarify its position before listing out new prices for express services. ZJS Express, founded in 1994, is one of the largest private express service providers in China.

"The new law will seriously affect small service providers, but big companies like ours will survive," Xiong said. "The new law aims to eliminate unqualified competitors in this market and further improve the quality of services and order of competition."

The latest reports say businesses in monopolized sectors are still waiting for clarification, according to Gao Hongfeng, vice minister of Transport at a national TV conference on the issue. "We have to be very careful on this issue," Gao said.

"The situation will probably be like this: the law will enter implementation at the scheduled time, but how to enforce it in the express service market will take another period of time to work out, after discussion and clarification," said Zhan Jisheng, president of Tiantian Express.

Noise map aims to clean up pollution

By Zhao Hongyi

Beijing now has its first noise map. Although it only shows the northwest corner of the city between Second and Fourth ring roads, engineers believe it will help Beijing fight against the increasingly serious problem of noise pollution and further improve living conditions and the environment.

The map covers 12.7 square kilometers and was drawn by the Beijing Municipal Institute of Labor Protection. It depicts land between Xizhimen and Deshengmen to the south, and Jianxiangqiao and Xueyuanqiao to the north. The map is painted in a dozen colors based on a survey of the intensity of noise pollution.

Noise pollution is categorized from 35 decibels to 85 decibels. Noise along the sides of highways is in blue, representing 75-plus decibels; sides between the city's main roads are around 70 decibels and in red or purple; noises inside residential communities are green or yellow, indicating noise levels between 40 and 45 decibels, acceptable to residents in downtown cities.

In general, noises along the roads and highways are the most polluted, said Hu Wencheng, the project's senior engineer.

"Most Chinese cities have their own noise pollution map," Hu said. "But they all rely on models introduced from foreign partners, which is not accurate in illustrating the situation in Chinese cities."

This time, the institute conducted hundreds of noise surveys along roads and communities, collected tens of thousands of figures and drew the map themselves. "It is very important for the authorities to take further steps, such as traffic management, road construction and reconstruction, noise reduction on the roads and buildings, and other noise control steps, to combat noise pollution in the city in the future," Hu said.

"The map can also be used by residents to find the quiet apartments to live in," said Zhang Bing, president of the institute. "Blocks inside communities or far away from the main roads and highways are the first choices for living."

Beijing is trying to reduce noise pollution by decorating the faces of buildings and reconstructing road surfaces. The aim of releasing the map is to bring attention to the issue, invite the public to monitor pollution and make suggestions for improvement.

'Carfree Day' pushes green transport



Volunteers ride special bicycles to promote "Carfree Day."

Tuesday was World Carfree Day, and in China more than 100 cities lent their support to "greener" modes of transportation, such as walking, cycling and taking the bus.

Authorities in Guangzhou set up special areas to promote the day, while 90 percent of cars reserved for official use were taken off the roads. In

Kunming, public officials were urged to lead by example and opt for transportation less damaging to the environment.

In Shanghai, authorities marked the day by sealing off some streets and only allowing pedestrians, cyclists, buses and taxis access.

Volunteers in Hangzhou handed out cards to drivers, asking

them to think green and take alternative forms of transportation.

Compared with the government's efforts, however, the public had very little planned for the day.

In Beijing, many citizens said they did not see much improvement in traffic Tuesday compared with other days. Some did not even know it was Carfree Day.

Critics say although many Chinese cities observed Carfree Day, some of them have not really grasped the concept of green transportation. They suggest the government should take real action to develop green transportation and public awareness; otherwise, World Carfree Day has been meaningless.

(By Han Manman)

So you think you can dance — in a wheelchair?

By Venus Lee

The Beijing Wheelchair Dancing base was established in the Disabled Service Center of Dongcheng District last Friday. This is China's first training center for wheelchair-using dance lovers.

Learners are dedicated

"One, two, three, four; one, two, three, four ..." Under the command of the teacher, a group of people in wheelchairs begin to stretch their hands, wriggle their waist and shrug their shoulders to the rhythm of the music.

Although they have to repeat this basic act again and again, becoming sweaty after two hours of training, they are immersed in the happiness of dancing.

"Just because you can't walk doesn't mean you can't dance," said Liu Wei, a 46-year-old lady. "I never thought I could dance in my lifetime, but I do it now. And the teacher said my moves are rhythmic, gentle and relaxed. I get very excited attending class and enjoy the process very much."

Two classes each week do not seem to be enough. "In order to improve my skills, I practice a lot at home after class," Liu said.

Liu said the most difficult thing is keeping the waist straight and not tumbling over while shaking the wheelchair with one hand or orbiting. "It requires a powerful waist because we have to sit ramrod straight and wriggle the waist during the performance to show our vitality and passion."

"It is really a tough job for them to sit upright for two hours each class, but they are so hard-



Wheelchair users gain confidence in their dancing abilities.

Photo provided by Tao Shun

working and never fail to attend class," Yi Dandan, the Latin dance teacher, said. "They are all eager to fulfill my requirements, but it is really a big challenge for them to perform well in such a short time, considering their physical limitations. Their seriousness and persistence really moved me a lot."

A new leisure sport in China

The sport was introduced to China in October 2008 after the Nagasaki Wheelchair Dancing Team (NWDT) from Japan did a performance in Beijing, according to the center.

"We never imagined disabled people could do such brilliant and

challenging performances before we met," said Tao Shun, the director of the center, referring to the NWDT members. "Their performance stunned us considerably. From then on, we realized we should also have a professional team on behalf of China."

With the support of Beijing Disabled Persons Federation (BDPE), the Disabled Service Center of Dongcheng District organized the first wheelchair-dancing team in November 2008. The ensemble now has 15 wheelchair dancers (the average age is 50), 12 volunteers and three teachers. This is China's only wheelchair-dancing team.

"China has more than 24 million people with physical disability, and the sport provides them an alternative recreational option," Tao said.

Other dances besides Latin are also possible. "The movement range of Latin is large and intense for some wheelchair users," Tao said. "It would be more suitable for some of them to learn modern dancing, especially folk dancing, which is more gentle and slower."

Tao said that though wheelchair dancing is a new sport in China, it has great potential for development because it provides participants with inspiration as well as health benefits.

"The dance can improve vitality, promote metabolism and lower blood pressure and blood sugar, create waist strength, prevent periarthritis of the shoulder and surplus fat from accumulating in the underbelly," he said. "What's more, many participants said they feel more confident and able-bodied — some even said they require less physical therapy — due to the workout they get during practices and perfor-

mances."

"The center has several clubs, including wheelchair basketball, track and field, tai chi, pingpong, diabolo, chess, driving and reading, but compared with competitive sports like wheelchair basketball or pingpong, I prefer dancing most," Liu said. "After all, women love beauty, and dance can shape our figure and temperament."

Difficulties lie ahead

Because it is still very new, wheelchair dancing still faces many challenges.

Tao said their activity is supported by the government but their funds are still insufficient. The cost of a specially made wheelchair is very expensive. Each wheelchair used for performance costs 12,000 yuan. "Some existing special wheelchairs were financed by BDPE, and the rest of them are borrowed from other organizations," he said. "We still need more funds to develop this sport, and we hope more entrepreneurs can support us."

The sport has not attracted mainstream attention yet. Tao said the participants now are mainly the center's staff members from the city's eight districts. Many people, especially family members of disabled people, still doubt whether the sport is safe enough.

In addition, it is hard to find able-bodied professional dancers to join the team.

"Able-bodied dancing partners are necessary because they can guide the wheelchair users in dancing better and safer, but few professional dancers will dedicate themselves to the course," Tao said. "It is because in wheelchair dancing, the real stars are those in wheelchairs. Able-bodied dancers are just background performers."

Bus-driving beauty in Shanghai becomes Internet sensation

By Zhang Dongya

Bus companies in Shanghai have recently begun employing young girls as conductresses, much to the surprise of passengers who have grown accustomed to seeing middle-aged conductresses.

This month, people taking Bus 934 discovered a beautiful, 20-something girl sat in the conductress seat wearing casual clothes. People began taking photos and videos and uploading them to the Internet.

China's human flesh search engine identified the girl as Gu Jiawen, an employee of the bus company. Gu, born in 1989, was called "post-90s bus beauty" on the Internet. With long hair, trendy clothes and accessories, colored nails and high-heeled shoes, she attracted much attention.

After her pictures and videos circulated online, people flocked to the stops on Bus 934's line to seek the girl. The attention caused her great psychological stress, and early in September, Gu asked for a week's leave. Now she is back to work, but she expressed hope for less public attention.

Beginning in March, bus com-



A young conductress on a Shanghai bus.

Photo provided by Xiao Yingpei

panies in Shanghai began to recruit new staff. The company recruited 28 conductors under the age of 25.

"We haven't recruited any members more than 20 years old," said a spokesman in the company's executive office. "Those on the present staff, who have spent nearly their entire lives working on the bus, are close to retirement, so we needed new hands."

Jobs on buses pay meager salaries and are never considered top options for young people. Nearly all the young employees are graduates from technical schools. Cit-

izens said they were pleased to see young people could take such hard work.

About the girl's casual clothes, Xu said the company was preparing to change uniforms this year and that the new clothes are still in production.

Shanghai bus companies have recruited as many as 2,500 new members, with about 80 percent of new hires between ages 20 and 30. These young employees are expected to work for the bus lines around the Shanghai Expo site in 2010.

Combining beauty with pleasure: Korean medical cosmetic tours

By Jin Zhu

Have you ever imagined going on a foreign tour and returning doubly beautiful? Now, there is a way to fulfill this fantasy. On March 23, the Beijing branch of Korea Tourism Organization (KTO) initiated a medical cosmetic tour, the first time KTO has promoted a tour in its name. It was to become an ongoing project.

However, the business met great challenges, since combining tourism and cosmetic surgery had never been tried before.

Some Chinese people have chosen medical cosmetic tours as the perfect way to relax while seeking beauty.

Photo provided by Zhu Linlin



A thriving business

Every item of news concerning beauty or cosmetic surgery is valuable, as far as Jin Binbin, a 27-year-old girl, is concerned.

Her interest in medical cosmetics started four years ago when she went to Seoul to study mass media. After years of living there, she came into close contact with the medical cosmetic industry in South Korea.

Trying to look young and beautiful is very common among ordinary South Koreans. "Even though some people were not beautiful, their skin was really well cared for," Jin said. "It was so common to see a lady or a young girl rushing into a clinic with a poster of a famous star in one hand."

"I wished I could be one of them. However, I couldn't afford it at that time."

Her dream came true nearly two years later when she returned to China after finishing her studies.

As a country with a high level of consumption, the prices in South Korea were rather high. However, at the end of last year, the exchange rate changed. One yuan could now be exchanged for 180 Korean Won, a 40 percent increase.

"The nose job I wanted used to cost 16,000 yuan, at least," Jin said. "But now I can have it at nearly half that price."

Jin went back to South Korea to fulfill her wish with a medical cosmetic tour group last May. "My tour lasted seven

days," she said. "Since I had made an appointment with the local clinic in advance, I still had time to enjoy a nice holiday after my operation."

According to KTO statistics, the number of tourists getting cosmetic surgery in South Korea has reached 12,000 in the past five years. The annual average growth rate is 18.5 percent.

"Most visitors come from China, Thailand and Malaysia. In the past three years, about 1,000 Chinese people have had cosmetic surgery in South Korea each year," said Zhu Linlin, KTO public relations manager.

Since the end of last year, KTO has noticed the thriving business and looked toward the Chinese market.

Starting March 23, a regular medical tour was jointly initiated by the Beijing branch of KTO and six famous outbound travel agencies in China, such as China Youth Travel Service and China International Travel Service.

It was the first time an overseas branch of the state-owned department for tourism devoted major effort to exploring the medical tour business.

Besides that, KTO has also organized trips for Chinese media and officials to have a closer look at the medical cosmetic industry.

"All activities are aimed at promoting medical cosmetics tours in South Korea," Zhu said. "It has become a policy in the country's tourism industry."

Diversity of choices

With the success of the Korean medical cosmetic tour business, questions arose about whether the surgery is worth the price.

Ma Jiguang, director of a plastic surgery hospital at the Chinese Academy of Medical Sciences, said people should not have blind faith in getting cosmetic surgery abroad.

For people doing small operations, such as tattooing lip lines and whitening skin, attending a medical cosmetic tour may be a good choice, since it is a way to relax while in a foreign country, Ma said.

However, "for major operations, seven days is not sufficient time to recover and get reexamined after the operation, which may put visitors at risk when they return," he said.

In addition, medical cosmetic work is subjective, depending on the doctor's concept of beauty.

"Since the concept is so different between China and foreign countries, it is quite possible to not get ideal results after surgery," Ma said.

"As matter of fact, the techniques that Chinese doctors use compare favorably with foreign doctors," he said. "Before being qualified to do medical cosmetic surgery, eight years of professional studies and at least one year of practice is needed."

"Cosmetic surgery itself is not difficult, but it's a matter of fine-tuning the results, which requires practice. For a famous Chinese doctor, nearly 1,000 surgeries per year are quite common, which hones their skill."

"A medical cosmetic tour to Korea is not the only way to obtain beauty," he added.

Unexpected difficulties

Not all people seeking beauty had as nice an experience as Jin, due to various reasons.

In August, a group of wealthy ladies who had cosmetic surgery was stopped by police when they returned to the country through Hongqiao Airport in Shanghai. Because their faces had not recovered from their operations, they did not look like the original photos on their passports.

Full preparations are needed before setting out, especially for people who are not familiar with the Korean medical cosmetic industry, Zhu said.

At present, there are two kinds of packages for the medical cosmetic tour group. One mainly focuses on touring the

city for four or five days. During that time, tourists can pay visits to medical cosmetic clinics to seek advice or make an appointment. Some can even have simple operations, such as tattooing lip lines and eyebrows and whitening skin. The other plan is only focused on cosmetic surgery and lasts at least seven days. Operations on eyes, raising the height of noses and face-lifting are included.

"For people intending to have major operations, paying a visit to set local clinics in advance is necessary," Zhu said.

Besides that, they should ask the local clinics to take photos before and after they have cosmetic surgery and provide clin-

ical diagnoses, which can be used for proving their true identity when they return to their home countries, she added.

At present, there are seven Korean travel agencies with branches in Beijing. According to the Regulation on Travel Agencies in China, foreign-owned travel agencies cannot offer outbound travel services. Therefore, local travel agencies currently only help visitors handle visa applications and provide translation services.

"The travel agency would recommend some local clinics to the visitors according to their previous experience," said Fang Shengyu, branch manager of Hanjin Travel Agency

in Beijing. However, visitors should make the final decision by themselves. The only thing we can do is sign a secrecy agreement with visitors, promising their private information related to cosmetic surgery will not be revealed."

Although no medical disputes have appeared among visitors so far, Fang said travel agencies are free from responsibility.

"It is a matter between visitors and local clinics," she said. "Although chances are low there will be disputes, there is no doubt that visitors would be troubled if they appeared, especially when they return to their home country."

Rethinking carbon diplomacy

A record number of world leaders participated in a meeting on climate change at the United Nations headquarters Wednesday.

The New York gathering, aimed at mobilizing the political will needed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, is the final major meeting on climate change before an international conference in Copenhagen in December.



Severe wind storms in the west of New South Wales have blown in a dust cloud. Many believe that if a positive agreement on combatting global climate change is not reached, more dust clouds will be seen in the future.

CFP Photo

China laid out a plan to curb carbon emissions by 2020, and US President Barack Obama called on all nations to act now to tackle global warming as world leaders tried to inject momentum into climate change talks.

Less than three months from a UN conference aimed at sealing the world's toughest pact to fight climate change, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon called on the leaders' summit to give negotiations an extra shove.

"While the summit is not the guarantee that we will get the global agreement, we are certainly one step closer to that global goal today," Ban said at the close of the meeting.

The one-day summit drew nearly 100 heads of state. This is advance of official talks among 190 nations in Copenhagen in December to forge a replacement to the Kyoto Protocol, whose first phase runs out at the

end of 2012.

Green policy lauded

Analysts and green groups gave cautious praise to China but said Obama's speech was long on rhetoric but short on specific pledges of US action.

In his address, President Hu Jintao said China's new plan included vigorously developing renewable and nuclear energy and promised emissions would grow slower than economic growth in the future.

"We will endeavor to cut carbon dioxide emissions per unit of GDP by a notable margin by 2020 from the 2005 level," Hu said.

The pledge, which marked the first time China has said it will accept measurable curbs on its emissions, was seen as an attempt to counter critics, especially in the US, who say China is doing too little to fight climate change.

Hu did not include specific

figures, however. A Chinese official said those would be ready soon.

Progress

"It is slow progress, but progress nevertheless. The standout was President Hu Jintao's announcement that China will take on a 2020 carbon intensity target," said Frank Jotzo, deputy director of the Australian National University's Climate Change Institute in Canberra.

"The greatest difficulty for Copenhagen right now is US domestic politics. It may take until well into 2010 for the US to be able to make an international commitment that is credibly backed by domestic policy," he said.

Environmentalists criticized Obama for not putting more specifics in his first UN address. "It is really more of a step back than a step forward," said Thomas Henningsen, climate coordinator for Greenpeace

International.

A climate change bill mandating cuts in US emissions is unlikely to be passed by the US Senate by December while other domestic issues, notably health-care reform, dominate the agenda.

Talks leading to the Copenhagen negotiations in Denmark have put developed and developing countries at odds over how to distribute emissions curbs. Poorer nations are pressuring richer ones to contribute hundreds of billions of dollars a year to help them cope with rising temperatures.

"It was a bit disappointing that China did not give a number for greenhouse gas intensity," said Knut Alfsen, head of research at the Center for International Climate and Energy Research in Oslo. "But this is progress. Five years ago, climate was a non-issue for China."

(Agencies)

Third eye

Something every American should realize

Every American has the image in his or her head that the US is the world's leader. Name anything and they will most likely spout off a "USA" chant and tell you how awesome the US is.

I'm exaggerating a little, but I would like to point out one very obvious key point in which the US should be, but is not, leading the world.

Over 100 heads of state met at the United Nations on Wednesday for an unprecedented day-long conference concerning climate change.

This is unprecedented because never before have so many nations agreed that a change must be made and devoted so much time to formal discussion of the matter.

The two stars of the conference were US President Obama and Chinese President Hu Jintao; both are leaders of the world's two biggest carbon-emitting countries. The difference between the two countries: one has already begun to take action, and one has been bogged down by political debate.

The fact of the matter is, China, while it emits closely equivalent to what the US does, is economically no match. Still a third-world country, however rapidly it may be growing and industrializing, China has many more difficulties limiting carbon emissions than the US would, but it is emerging as top dog on the matter.

Aside from the climate change debate, it is a fact that sooner rather than later a worldwide shift in energy policy is inevitable as many experts foresee oil consumption peaking merely years away – if not already reached.

China has already made it possible for a solar energy industry to thrive within its borders. Not only that, the developing nation has committed to increasing the use of non-fossil fuels and nuclear power to 15 percent in 10 years.

– John Coleman, news editor of the SMU Daily Campus



Guesting in Yuanqi Tea House



Deep in the tranquil Xiaoju Hutong, Dongcheng District, this courtyard residence is overwhelmed with the scent of Brahma-susvara and tea.

Inside the quadrangle are old locust trees, jujubes and a small fish pond with pretty goldfishes and tender lotus.

Each separate tea room offers surprises, like Go and chess tables or an old

guzheng, a Chinese zither. Have a cup of top grade wild Pu'er and let the ancient aroma penetrate your blood. The summer heat will vanish without a trace and leave you refreshed.

Every weekend, the tea house holds courses to teach foreigners the arts of tea and calligraphy. You can appreciate the teas' fine

scent and gain knowledge at the same time. Yuanqi Tea House is a great stop on any Beijing Hutong Tour. Stay for a while to experience traditional Beijing culture and enjoy unique tea.

Address: 40 Xiaoju Hutong, Dongzhimen Nan Xianjie, Dongcheng District
Tel: 010-8400 2804
Web site: www.yuanqichina.com

Taste for luxury

Country's luxury consumption market heats up

By Huang Daohen

Is there a financial crisis in China? When it comes to buying luxurious jewelry, clothes and accessories, the answer just may seem like "No." The World Luxury Association (WLA) said in its latest report that China has overtaken the US as the world's second largest luxury market.

While the rich around the world are being squeezed and focus more on daily expenses, a rapidly expanding group in China seeks to enhance its identity and quality of life with luxury goods.



The capital's downtown streets have attracted more and more global luxury brands.

CFP Photo

A large and ever-growing market

With a fistful of shopping bags from Gucci, Dior and Prada in hand, 27-year-old Chen Xiao prowled an upscale department store.

"Is there a financial crisis in China? I don't think we are affected very much," Chen said. During a 90-minute spree last weekend, she spent about 5,000 yuan at a downtown Guomao Shopping Mall.

Chen, a local woman, is a secretary in a multinational company located in Guomao. On top of her salary, she also gets an allowance from her parents. She said last weekend's shopping trip was part of a twice-a-month spending spree.

Chen's behavior is typical of well-heeled shoppers who have spent freely during the global economic crisis. According to the WLA, about 13 percent of China's total population lavished about 58.7 billion yuan on shiny and pretty things in 2008, which accounts for a quarter of the world's luxury goods.

"If you think China is still a developing country, this piece of news is going to surprise you," said Ouyang Kun, the representative of WLA's China office.

Chinese spending on luxury goods has increased by 25 percent every year so far, he said.

The disposable income of Chinese people has been rising in recent years. The US consulting firm Bain & Company says China will have more than 4 million households with an annual income above 250,000 yuan by 2015, ranking it only below the US, Japan and Britain in terms of numbers of households with substantial purchasing power.

WLA predicts that if China continues to grow at a similar pace, the nation will surpass Japan as the world's largest luxury market in 2015.

A local Chinese magazine, *Caijing*, was stunned by the country's purchasing power, calling its citizens, "The People that Wear Prada."

What is the driving force?

Why does a country with a large rural base love to buy luxury goods? Zhao Xiao, professor at the University of Science and

If China continues to grow at a similar pace, the nation will surpass Japan as the world's largest luxury market in 2015.

Technology, said it is all about the "face thing."

Some Chinese spending is driven by people's desire to enhance their social status and visibility by association with famous brand names, Zhao said.

"Not many years ago, it was not uncommon to see owners of a new suit or hat conspicuously forget to remove the brand name and price tag that revealed the maker and high price of their new apparel," he said.

The China Brand Association recently said about 13 percent of Chinese – or 170 million people – regularly buy top-tier brands.

There is no doubt why luxury brands come to China.

Gucci said China represented

one of the most dynamic areas of retail growth for the firm, with 2008 sales growth in the mainland at 42 percent. The global profit for the company edged up 0.2 percent from a year ago.

LVMH, one of the world's leading luxury goods manufacturers, claims in its annual report that performance in China was solid and strong, while sales in the US fell 4.03 percent and in Japan 5.16 percent last year.

Cartier, the French jeweler and watchmaker, is planning more stores in first- and second-tier Chinese cities after posting double-digit growth last year.

Obstacles ahead

Still, there are obstacles along the way, and a major one is the counterfeit problem, said Michael Thorneman, market expert at Bain & Company.

Luxury goods rely in large part upon their prestigious brand name, Thorneman said. However, in some areas of southern China, 20 percent of consumer goods may be counterfeit.

In addition to direct counterfeits, luxury goods in China also face "bang mingpai," which literally translates as "relative of a famous brand." Illegal variants of the famous Italian brand Valentino, for example, can be found with names like Valentino Vani, Autot Valentino or Valentino Guci.

"These goods are relatively cheaper and do harm to original brands," he said.

Thorneman suggested consumption taxes on luxury products be cut to spur sales. In April 2006, the Chinese government announced an increase in taxes on certain luxury goods, including watches, golf clubs, cars and yachts.

Analyst

Who wins in China's luxury market?

Automobiles

Despite China having an average per capita income of less than US 27,000 yuan, Bentley has sold more Mulliner 728 limousines – the most expensive car in the world, retailing at US \$1.2 million (8 million yuan) – in Beijing than anywhere else in the world.

Likewise, BMW's sales fell 19 percent worldwide, but in China they grew 26 percent. Industry analysts predict that China will soon become the world's largest market for luxury automobiles.

Affordable luxuries

Ultra-high-end purchases, such as of Bentley limousines, are made by only a tiny share of millionaires. Many far less wealthy Chinese are consuming "affordable luxuries."

LVMH is already branching into less well-known Chinese cities, such as Shenyang, Wenzhou and Chengdu. It plans to enter two new cities per year in China. LVMH reports that every store has been profitable every year since it entered China in 1992.

Hurun Report, a socialite magazine in Shanghai,

interviewed 600 Chinese millionaires to identify their preferred brands. Among their selections, Vacheron Constantin was the best watch brand; Davidoff the best cigar brand; Giorgio Armani the best designer; Hennessy, Chivas Regal and Dom Perignon the best liquors; Princess the best yacht; and Ferrari the best sports car.

Retailers

It is not just luxury good manufacturers who are profiting. Luxury retailers are also growing rapidly.

Fancy boutiques featuring Italian suits are springing up even in less prestigious cities, like Shenyang and Wuhan. The Cartier jewelry chain, which said its revenues in China have nearly doubled since 2005, created a massive ice replica of its flagship Paris store at the famous winter festival in Harbin last year.

Advertisers

Likewise, advertising firms are profiting from the incessant promotion of fashion and luxury goods. While most luxury goods have a high gross margin, the sales and marketing required to sell the goods is often extensive.

Entrapment of illegal taxi drivers or kind-hearted strangers?

By Zhang Dongya

Traffic administration agencies' use of baits to catch *heiche*, or illegal taxis, has generated a lot of buzz online.

Early this month in Shanghai, an office worker employed by a Top 500 company posted a message online saying he had kind-heartedly given a stranger a ride but was arrested by the authorities for "illegal taxi operation."

He shared on xcar.com.cn, one of the biggest Beijing-based car community networks, his experience of being "baited" and warned other drivers to be careful.

The driver, later given the pseudonym Zhang Jun by domestic media, said he was driving his car on Huaning Road in Shanghai at 1 pm on September 8 when he stopped at a red light at the Yuanjing intersection.

A man in a white suit appeared by his window, asking for a ride. The stranger said he was suffering from stomach pain but could not find an empty taxi. Zhang said he refused to let the man in at first, but reconsidered when he saw the person's pain.

When they stopped at another red light on Beisong Road, Zhang's passenger suddenly grabbed his car keys from the ignition. Almost simultaneously, seven or eight traffic enforcers in uniform descended upon him and threw him into a waiting minibus.

Zhang said they forced him to sign a document acknowledging an administrative offense. His car was impounded until he paid a fine of 10,000 yuan.

"I signed and paid the fine, but that didn't mean I admitted to 'illegal vehicle operation' as they claimed I did. I had no other choice, I had to get my car back," he said.

A spokesman for the traffic administration enforcement department of Shanghai Urban Construction and Communications said a car is only considered an illegal taxi if the driver and the passenger make a business deal.

Zhang says he remembers the stranger offering to pay him 10 yuan for the ride, but says he never thought about accepting the money. "When he talked about the money, I didn't say anything at the time, but it did not mean I agreed to the deal. Actually, I did not accept even 1 yuan," he says.

It was later discovered that Zhang works as a marketing manager for Saint-Gobain Group, a multinational company that manufactures housing materials. He earns at least 20,000 yuan a month; Zhang showed reporters his pay slip to prove his identity and said it was obvious he had no need to



Illegal taxis provide convenience to people living in the suburbs, but give traffic authorities a big headache.

CFP Photo

operate an illegal taxi service.

Zhang later made a complaint phone call with the traffic department of Shanghai Urban Construction and Communications, where an operator admitted they use baits to catch illegal taxis. Their baits would get paid if a driver is successfully apprehended. The operator also admitted they have made erroneous arrests and let these innocent drivers go.

After his case made national news, Zhang said he began receiving phone calls from drivers who have had similar experiences. He is now preparing to sue the Minhang District Traffic Administration Enforcement, which arrested him.

But Zhang says he has no illusions he will win the lawsuit. "Previous cases never succeeded. But the outcome is not what's important to me. I just want to call the public's attention to avoid such incidents happening in the future," he says.

There are people who use private cars to make extra money by ferrying strangers, which is especially common in China's suburbs. The practice is illegal because only licensed taxis can engage in this type of business. Taxi drivers have long complained about improper competition with "black taxis."

Provincial governors have taken measures to eliminate illegal taxis through checking suspect drivers' licenses and encouraging passenger reports. Illegal cars will be fined 10,000 yuan, with drivers arrested and the car detained.

Comment

Needs justice in court

The difficulty lies in the basis of the punishment. Despite the executive agencies saying people who are unsatisfied with the campaign's results can make use of legal channels – and car owners agree to go to court – the process lacks an independent and mature judicial process. Law enforcers refuse to show further evidence, so there are big questions about the fairness of their procedures.

– Wang Lin, critic with the Beijing Times

Luxury illegal taxis do exist

Not all "black taxis" are shabby. I have encountered a luxury Mondeo car that stopped beside me and the driver asked whether I needed a ride. I think we shouldn't discount drivers who look like office workers, since some of them do operate

illegal businesses.

– Zm Mutangchun, netizen on comment.2008.sina.com.cn

A big satire

In our world today, if you urgently need a taxi because you're sick or have an emergency, and someone offers to give you a ride, that is a rare person, a kind-hearted person. But what the traffic department has done has been to arrest such nice people, impound their cars and fine them 10,000 yuan. They (traffic agencies) are not wiping out illegal taxis but moral virtue.

– Han Han, writer and blogger

Insufficiency of evidence

I have experienced entrapment [in Shanghai], too. The bait begged and since I was going the same way, I decided to give him a ride. When he talked about pay-

ment, I didn't reply, but thought, Why not, since it could help pay for gas. But I don't agree with the accusation that my aim was to earn extra money. I think the evidence-collecting part is too simple and hasty.

– Tz, netizen on chinasmack.com

Resort to the law

I strongly suggest (victims) hire a lawyer and go through legal channels. Even if you lose the lawsuit, you will at least get an explanation. I want to remind you: in a previous case, the driver lost the suit because he had signed the car-towing receipt. Did you sign anything? The judge said signing is admitting to operating an illegal taxi. Then you will be speechless.

– Stonework, netizen on chinasmack.com

Background

Heiche prevails in China

Heiche (black taxis), private cars that make money by ferrying strangers, which is especially common in China's suburbs. The practice is illegal because only licensed taxis can engage in this type of business. Taxi drivers have long complained about improper competition with "black taxis."

Traffic enforcement agencies in Shanghai have long used the bait method to catch unlicensed taxi operators. They describe this method on their Web site as "collect evidence first, then investigate and penalize."

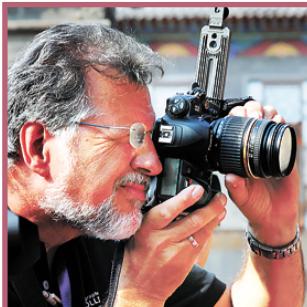
A report on the site says that in 2007 and 2008, the agencies caught as many as 5,000 illegal taxis and collected more than 50 million yuan in fines.

The enforcement department party said the assistance staff would make a record of their discussion on the money deal to prove the drivers were illegal cars. But most people disagree, saying this is like "tempting criminals."

Not one driver who sued the traffic agencies while claiming innocence has ever won. In

2007, a man surnamed Zhou from Shanghai was caught by the Nanhui District Traffic Administration Enforcement. He sued the traffic administration and lost, but through the court's arbitration he recovered the 10,000 yuan he was fined.

Lawyers say one thing working against car owners is the difficulty of providing evidence that they are not operating illegal taxis; once an owner lets a bait in, it will be hard for him to claim innocence, and half the case is lost.



Pingyao attracts many foreign photographers.

Photo by Han Jiang

By Han Manman

A photo exhibition exclusively dedicated to Canadian surgeon Henry Norman Bethune opened last Saturday at the Pingyao International Photography Festival (PIP) in Shanxi Province.

Bethune is a household name in China, a country where he saved numerous lives and sacrificed his own in 1939 during the Sino-Japanese War.

"He is noble-minded and pure, a man of moral integrity and above vulgar interests, a man who is of value to the people," Chairman Mao wrote in his article "In Memory of Norman Bethune."

The exhibition consists of 41 photos of Bethune living and working in China, some of which had never been shown before.

"As Canadians, we are all proud to be associated with this visionary adventurer and deeply touched by the respect and recognition shown to him here in China," said David Mulroney, the Canadian Ambassador.

Bethune's exhibition was just a small part of the Pingyao festival.

World's photographers turn eyes on Pingyao



The theme of this year's festival was "love and dream."

CFP Photo

The seven-day event, with the theme of "love and dream," closed today, having attracted more than 1,200 photographers from 46 countries. Many world-famous photographers, such as Stephen Sames, attended, as well as organizations like the Aperture Foundation, a world-leading nonprofit arts institution dedicated to promoting photography. Liu Xiong, a press officer of the PIP committee said the city

of Pingyao has 2,700 years of history and, recognized by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site in 1997, is a great attraction for photographers, and an ideal rendezvous for them to exchange ideas.

"During the festival, even many locals have become great photographers and critics," Liu said.

"Finally, I have the opportunity to see China and meet Chinese photographers," said Sames, who

has received awards from Kodak Crystal Eagle for Impact in Photo-journalism, World Hunger Year, among others. "I always wanted to come to China, as my mother, who visited China as a scholar in the 1970s, told me so much about the country."

"Pingyao festival is quite well known in the world and I think it is the best photography festival in China," said Alasdair Foster, director of Sydney-based Australian Centre for Photography (ACP), Australia's leading photo-art center.

"This is a great global event where we see an incredible amount of works, a whole spectrum of photos and a variety of cultures and traditions," Foster said.

Started in 2001, Pingyao International Photography Festival is the largest annual photography festival in China.

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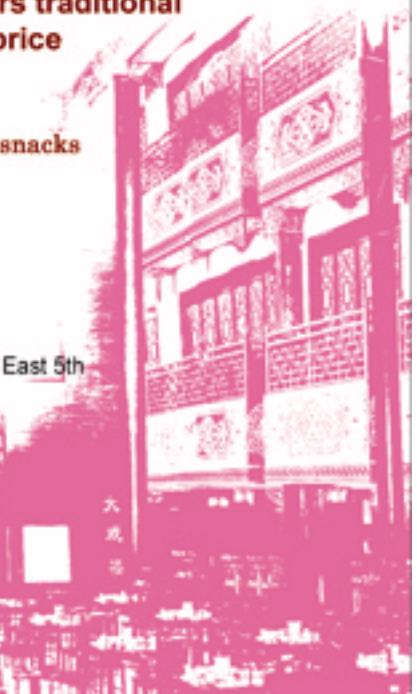
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Diplomats witness change through pics of New China

By Han Manman

A thousand diplomats and expats in Beijing saw an overview of the changes within China since 1949 at a photo exhibition Monday that showcased New China's achievements.

China started out as a country with arable land but limited other resources to solve the problem of providing food and clothing for its population of 1.3 billion, said John Kerry, an American associate professor at the Tsinghua University School of Architecture.

Now China produces millions of college graduates each year that strengthen the country's position as an economic powerhouse.

"The speed of expansion of China's higher education and its universal basic education in such a short period of time is unbelievable. In my view, China's cultural and scientific achievements in the field are not simple," Kerry said, adding that "some people who always discuss human rights issues do not recognize the tremendous changes that have taken place in China."

Ambassadors who attended the exhibition also hailed New China's accomplishments.

Ethiopian ambassador Hailekiros Gessesse said China's biggest achievement in the past 60 years has been the advance-



The exhibition showcasing New China's achievements attracting many diplomats.

Xinhua Photo

ment of its agricultural industry, which the African people can learn from.

Another guest, Romanian ambassador Viorel Istricioaia-Budura, said one of China's strengths is the ability to understand the past and learn its lessons.

"Last year, you evaluated 30 years of reform and opening up. This is very important, and why? It can help us look to the future with confidence," said Istricioaia-Budura, an old China hand who came to the country in 1973.

"Most Romanian students in Beijing study economics, includ-

ing non-government scholars," he said, adding that students choose that field of study to learn the secret of the Chinese people's economic success. This year, China and Romania celebrate six decades of diplomatic ties; the Eastern European nation was one of the first three countries to recognize the People's Republic.

The exhibition "Glorious Sixties – The People's Republic of China 60th Anniversary Exhibition," covering New China's economic, political and socio-cultural achievements, will run at the Beijing Exhibition Center until October 20.

Economic ties with Germany growing strong

By Han Manman

Germany's economic policy on China will not change even if the German leadership does following the general election on Sunday, the chairman of the German Chamber of Commerce (GCC) said Tuesday.

Richard Hausmann said at a news conference that the GCC hopes there will be more opportunities in China for German enterprises.

At least 5,000 projects in China are run by German companies or German funding, a number that has risen slightly in 2009 despite the global economic slowdown, GCC data reveals.

They provide know-how, technology and training to Chinese workers – a key role in the Chinese market, said Hausmann, who is also Siemens' CEO for Northeast Asia.

"If China's economy was not so strong, the impact of the global financial crisis would have been greater for us," he said.

Germany currently ranks 9th among countries with foreign direct investment (FDI) in China, an amount totaling 107 billion yuan to date.

The trade volume between the two countries is also on the rise. In 2008, German exports to China were valued at 344 billion yuan, and imports from China amounted to 600 billion yuan, the GCC said.

Many Chinese exports to Germany are produced by German companies or joint ventures, some of which use German raw materials, Hausmann said, adding that this indirectly boosts employment in Germany.

According to the World Trade Organization, this year China is set to overtake Germany as the biggest goods exporter.

"A consensus has been reached that even if there had been no financial crisis, the world economic center would transfer from the US and Europe to Asia. Which country exports more doesn't bother us. Germany is a small country with a population of 80 million, so there will be no embarrassment if China overtakes us," the GCC head said.

As for the global financial crisis, Hausmann said its bright side has been to draw people's attention to the potential of green, energy-saving technology. He said Germany's eco-friendly technology is one of Europe's best and that he hopes some of this can be introduced to China.

Most German enterprises in China own top-level technology and are committed to environmental protection in ways like reducing emission and improving fuel combustion efficiency. These enterprises can help China achieve its goal of creating a green economy, Hausmann said.

US family brings its Yunnan coffee to town



Sahra Malik (second from right) hosts a free coffee-tasting event at Face Bar.

Photo provided by Sahra Malik

By Annie Wei

Yunnan Province is China's main coffee-producing area. A report in *The Kunming Daily* said the province generates 95 percent of the country's total coffee output with the rest coming from Hainan.

But beware that not all coffees labeled "made in Yunnan" are telling the truth. And because local manufacturers employ a variety of coffee-manufacturing methods, even four- and five-star hotels in the provincial capital of Kunming have refused to use local brands.

Shangri-La Gourmet Coffee, which entered the Beijing market two weeks

ago, hopes to win greater confidence for Yunnan coffee brands.

The company is owned by a family from the US that has put down roots in China. The family matriarch, Carter Malik, runs an eco-tourism and community development NGO in Shangri-la, a county in Yunnan. The organization, Yunnan Mountain Handicrafts Center, helps the locals preserve their cultural heritage and market their traditional handicrafts. It also runs a community library and gives free English classes to children.

Two years ago, the Maliks came across a farmers' cooperative and roasting facility

in Yunnan. Soon after, they decided to set up a coffee farm to help local farmers increase their income and produce a high quality brand. They even imported six varieties of coffee during their research and development phase.

Shangri-La Gourmet's coffees are grown in farms a thousand meters above sea level, where the air is fresh and the water clean. The company's products are certified Green Food, Sahra Malik, the managing director and the founder's daughter, said, adding they are now applying for organic farm status.

She said they buy their coffee beans at competitive

prices and give 20 percent of Shangri-La Gourmet's profits to their NGO.

The brand's launch at Face Bar, which offered free coffee-tasting, drew 200 guests.

One of them, Ding Xuwen, 25, is a big fan of Yunnan coffee and visited farms in the southern province two months ago. "I'm supporting local agriculture and fair trade practices," said the investment analyst.

Jenifer Yang, 37, a wine sales manager, said she considers Shangri-La Gourmet's price of 38 to 68 yuan per bag of coffee value for money.

The brand is available in supermarkets such as April Gourmet and Jenny Lou's.

Event Broadway musical Cats

Cats is an award-winning musical composed by Andrew Lloyd Webber based on T. S. Eliot's collection of poetry, *Old Possum's Book of Practical Cats*. This month, Webber's award-winning classic comes to Beijing, performed by Australia's finest musical theater actors.

Where: Beijing Exhibition Center Theater, 135 Xizhimen Wai Dajie, Xicheng District

When: September 25-27,

7:30-9 pm

Tel: 6417 7845

Serve the People cooking class

Jen Lin-Liu, founder and owner of cooking school Black Sesame Kitchen, will hold a cooking demonstration of recipes from her book, *Serve the People*. The menu for the day includes Shanghai-style red-braised pork, Sichuan-style string beans and candied apples.

Where: Black Sesame Kitchen, 3 Heizima Hutong, Dongcheng District

When: September 26, 1-4 pm

Tel: 6403 5153

Playwriting and directing classes

This workshop discusses the ins and outs of producing and directing stage performances and will teach participants the practical tools that will enable them to put up their own plays. The workshop culminates in the performance of a play developed during the workshop, or the new director's choice of a classic work. Auditions will later be held to fill roles needed for the performance. Preference will be given to actors who participate in the workshop series.

Where: Penghao Theatre

Where: 35 Dongmianhua Hutong, Dongcheng District

When: September 26, 5-7 pm

Tel: 6400 6452

(By Wei Ying)

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Amateur Chinese theater groups in town



Theater Santuoqi, performing at the Beijing Youth Theater Festival, attracted a full house.

CFP Photo

By Annie Wei

The city is seeing the rise of more and more foreign-run amateur theater groups. These include Beijing Playhouse, which gives foreign and Chinese children their turn on stage; Beijing Actors Workshop, which offers directing, acting and writing classes at 50 yuan a session; and experimental theater groups Beijing Improv and Cheeky Monkey Theater.

There are many more out there if you count Chinese theater groups. These, however, are trickier for foreigners to join because of obvious differences in language and culture. But those who are brave enough to try will reap benefits, such as a deeper understanding of Chinese culture, not to mention a fast-track course in learning Mandarin.

Below are *Beijing Today's* top three picks of Chinese theater and acting groups.

Xiaotang

The troupe, also called X2 Drama Studio, is the most ambitious and the most successful among Beijing's amateur theater groups. It was founded in 2005 by a group of professional stage actors. Within three years, they had done 2,000 shows of more than 20 plays for an audience of 300,000.

Most of their works focus on the life stories of the generation

born in the 1970s.

Where: A-711 Haitian Shangwu Building, 107 Dongsi Bei Dajie, Dongcheng District

Tel: 6403 0977

Santuoqi

Established 12 years ago, Santuoqi brings together young people who are interested in experimental theater. Members strive for diversity in theatrical performance and pursue the artistic interpretation of "sad humor"

and "brilliant imagination."

Some of its members come from the Central Academy of Drama, the National Academy of Chinese Theater Arts and Renmin University of China.

Where: Xianfeng Theater, 8-2 Dongdan San Tiao, Dongcheng District

Tel: 6270 2700

Compagnie Ningchun

Compared with the two other groups, Ningchun's members

have the most professional training. Its founder Ning Chunyan is a French-born Chinese who came back to China in 2005 as a professor at Communication University of China. She founded the troupe two years later and has since staged a series of popular French plays in Chinese. Her efforts are supported by the French Embassy and other big firms.

Contact: blog.sina.com.cn/ningchun/

Veterinary center sponsors rabies prevention seminar

By Annie Wei

To mark World Rabies Day on Monday, the International Center for Veterinary Services (ICVS) is hosting a seminar about the importance of rabies prevention.

The disease is on the rise in China, with the majority of transmissions coming from dog bites. Less than 10 percent of dogs in the country are vaccinated against rabies despite laws mandating annual vaccinations, said Mary Peng, manager of ICVS.

The seminar aims to promote rabies prevention beginning with animal owners. "Protect yourself, your pet and your community by taking animals to be vaccinated only at officially designated animal vaccination hospitals," Peng said.

The ICVS also warns the public to stay clear of stray animals and wildlife. A person who gets bitten should wash bite wounds with soap and water and seek medical attention immediately.

If your pet gets bitten, consult a veterinarian immediately. Prompt and appropriate treatment can

stop rabies infection and prevent the disease from developing in humans and animals.

Beijing Today recently talked to ICVS about rabies prevention.

Stray and wild animals

Adopting a stray dog or cat is a wonderful thing to do since there are so many homeless animals that need our care. But first, bring your newly adopted pet to a licensed and officially designated animal vaccination hospital. A veterinarian will give the animal a full physical examination and discuss with you the necessary vaccinations and a proper vaccination schedule, in addition to other pet care concerns.

All pets that receive a rabies vaccination from a licensed veterinarian will also be issued a Beijing Animal Health and Immunization Certificate. This document is needed if you take the animal to other Chinese cities or overseas.

ICVS discourages people from purchasing or adopting wildlife. Most wildlife species are protected in China and are forbidden from

being hunted or sold. Wild animals are not suited to life in captivity; they should live in their natural habitats.

In many countries where rabies in the domesticated animal populations have been reduced or eradicated, rabies still exists among wildlife.

People should never try to approach, pet or capture wild animals because there is significant risk of being bitten or hurt.

Prompt and appropriate treatment after being bitten

In line with WHO and China Animal Disease Control Center guidelines, the ICVS recommends vaccine therapy with human rabies immunoglobulin (HRIG) to people exposed to rabies who have not previously received any rabies vaccination.

Unauthorized facilities are not permitted to purchase rabies vaccines; if they do, they have likely procured these through illegal channels.

Illegally procured vaccines may be counterfeit, expired or



Vaccination is a reliable way to prevent rabies.

CFP Photo

improperly stored, and therefore ineffective. Unauthorized facilities include pet shops, grooming salons, small animal clinics and animal hospitals that have not been designated by the government as animal rabies vaccination hospitals.

Pre-exposure rabies vaccinations are recommended for all travelers and residents in China, especially children.

World Rabies Day is an international campaign that seeks to reinforce the message that rabies is a preventable disease.

International Center for Veterinary Services

Where: Kent Center, 29 Liangmaqiao Lu, Anjialou, Chaoyang District

When: September 28, 4-5 pm
Tel: 8456 1939

ASK Beijing Today

Email your questions to:
weiyi@ynet.com

My son is 10 years old and a bit introverted. Is there a workshop for kids that can help improve his confidence and communication skills?

Voice and Stage Acting Junior Workshop, for children between ages 8 and 12, may be what you are looking for. Participants can build confidence while gaining skills in acting, public speaking, creative writing and thinking. They will also work together to make costumes, props and sets, and play games.

This 12-week workshop starts tomorrow and culminates in a performance on December 5 and 6 – an original play about the thoughts and experiences of participants. Instructors speak both Chinese and English.

Where: Fu Café, 71 Chaodou Hutong, Nanluogu Xiang, Dongcheng District

Tel: 13520450019

Cost: 150 yuan per student per week

I like going to night markets because of the variety of street food being sold. Do you know a club for people with the same interest? People who visit night markets together?

You might want to check out Hias Gourmet's Night Market Tour. This walking tour brings participants to Wangfujing Snack Street and Donghuamen Night Market. These markets, a magnet for tourists, offers more than a hundred different delicacies. For the more adventurous eaters, there are scorpions, silk worms, beetles and starfish.

The tour is held every Tuesday, Wednesday and Sunday from 7 to 9 pm. Booking is required. People who have dietary restrictions or are pregnant should inform organizers in advance.

Tel: 6400 9199

Cost: 350 yuan per person (includes food and drink tastings)

I am writing to you to ask for information about a baking course. I am in my 40s and really want to join a class that teaches people to make really good French bread or cake. I do not care of the cost and I have enough leisure time to join any class any time.

Beijing Today recommends a Frenchman's baking classes at Gulou Dong Dajie.

For more information, please contact him through his Chinese blog at blog.sina.com.cn/chezromain.

(By Venus Lee)

All about reali

Zhang Yuan and his mo

By Wang Yu

Who is Zhang Yuan? Different people have different ideas. He has been written into Chinese film lore as an icon among "sixth generation" directors who have built their reputations underground. On the other hand, some think he is "over-commercialized" because he has made suspense films, music videos and even advertisements.

All his works show the cruel aspects of the world while stopping just short of their emotional peaks. Regular moviegoers may not be used to his style; to most of them, Zhang is known only as the director who was caught last year taking drugs at home. In addition, he is much more famous outside this country.

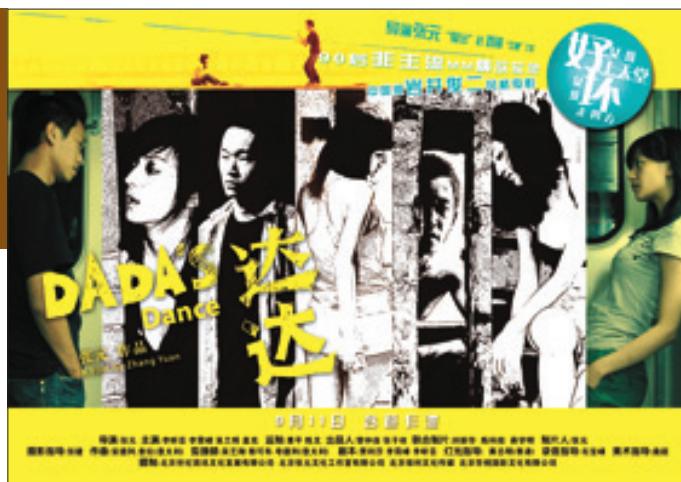
"My films recreate the reality of this country from the underground to the surface," the director says. "I hope more of a native audience will see reality through these stories."

Zhang Yuan is sitting on the sofa in a Thai restaurant just inside his residential community. *Dada's Dance*, his 16th film, has just opened in local cinemas and the director is busy accepting promotional interviews. His signature hairstyle is still the up-do, and instead of coffee or soft drinks he orders a whiskey. It is four o'clock in the afternoon.

Zhang Yuan believes in the idea that when making a movie, to get reality, one has to forget reality.

Photo by Jin Yuxin





Dada's Dance is described as "a sexy story of a post-90s beauty" on the poster. However, the director says that is nothing but the movie company tries to create hype.

Photos provided by Zhang Yuan



Dada is sensitive, independent and, like ordinary young women, she needs love.

The Odyssey of Dada

"How could I tear up the poster," Zhang says. The movie's poster is covered with promotional words such as "a sexy story of a post-90s beauty," and "a Chinese version of a Shunji Iwai movie."

"It's just how they write the story on paper," he adds. "The distribution company wants to create hype on the poster, which in my opinion doesn't have anything to do with the movie itself."

It is true that the story contains sensitive elements such as a single-parent girl, sexual harassment and murder. However, filtered through Zhang's lens, the movie ends up more like a mixture of *Carmen* and *The Odyssey*, told in a peaceful way.

Dada is the neighborhood coquette who lives with her divorced mother. The young beauty works at a pool hall and is a tease to the local men, including the boy next door, Zhao Ye, who has a crush on her. However, there is another guy who has eyes for her – her mother's boyfriend.

The story gets interesting after the lascivious man leaks to Dada her mother is actually a foster mother. Together with Zhao, Dada goes to look for her real mother in another city. To the young couple, the journey is also a way of running away from their hometown and working on their budding love.

"Who can find his real mother, after all?" Zhang asks. The movie was inspired by this question, asked by an anonymous figure in one of Zhang's dreams in 2003. The director wrote the first version of the story after he got out of the bed. However, the script never truly materialized until Zhang had a talk with Li Xinyun and Li Xiaofeng about a rape case four years later. The two would eventually become the film's lead actor and actress, respectively, as well as co-writers.

"Neither of them are professional screenwriters, but as they were also the lead roles in this movie, it was quite easy for us to finish the shooting. They know their characters better than anyone else," Zhang says.

Though the English title of the movie is *Dada's Dance*, there was no dancing in the original script until the director saw Dada's home from Zhao's angle and decided to write in a dance scene. The young lady tangos by herself to music composed by the Italian musician Andrea Guerra. The dance became a significant thematic point.

The girl needs love, but she wants to remain independent, which in Zhang's opinion is a feeling shared by many contemporary young women, and even those of former generations.

"Life is magical because you always forget what you used to be when you grow up," Zhang says. "I'm 46 years old, but we had similar experiences when we were young. Generation gap is bullshit – people are just easy to forget things. I am trying to catch these things in front of the camera."

The cruel and unreal world

Since his debut movie, *Mama*, which was finished in 1990, Zhang's movies are always

filled with people trying to survive their problems – from poor rockers to kids who can never get used to kindergarten life. (In *The Little Red Flowers*, made in 2006, a kindergarten is depicted through a child's eyes as a strange and dangerous place.) Dada is no exception. She is attractive but weird to Zhao; case in point, in one scene she suddenly pushes her foster mother's boyfriend off a balcony.

"In this era, human nature has been globalized, so you don't have to think about whether Dada really lives in China or not," Zhang says. "The lifestyle here changed with people's way of thinking. I always try to record or recreate the reality of life. When we are making a movie, the camera never runs until I have convinced myself that the scene can really happen around us."

"People thought that Zhang Yuan was f__ked, but look at me now, I'm alive, continuing to do everything I used to, nothing changed."

Even the way Dada kills her mother's boyfriend has been changed several times by the director to reflect reality. However, the movie never strays far from Zhang's personal style.

"I believe in the idea that to get reality, you have to forget reality. It is reflected in the history of art. At first people gravitated towards realism, catching the real aspects of the world in paintings. Then came Picasso, whose reality remained in the aesthetics," Zhang says.

Zhang's *Crazy English*, a 1999 documentary of a native English training school, is another film that presents the world's cruelty. The school's founder, Li Yang, creates a national trend of learning English. But the crowd in this movie resembles nothing if not a fanatic mob.

For this movie, Zhang was partially inspired by his idol, Rainer Werner Fassbinder. The English learners' behavior is imbecilic but scenes themselves are powerful. The movie premiered in the Toronto International Film Festival in 2000, to much laughter from viewers. Last year, however, the audience's reaction was markedly different when it was screened in Por-

tugal: silence.

"Li says at the end of the movie that China will become the center of the world when people start to learn Chinese the way they learn English," Zhang says. "That is now the reality, which is why I think the laughter has gone."

Nothing really changed

It was not until he finished *Seventeen Years* in 1999 that Zhang started to build his reputation among the mainstream. Because it was his first movie that passed the test of the State Administration of Radio Film and Television, it was shown nationwide.

Before that, the director had earned recognition, including several international awards. But Zhang always felt it was a shame that his movie could not be shown inside his home country's borders.

"My movies traveled around the world and some were sold to more than 60 countries. But I was not satisfied and never thought the West really needed my stories," Zhang says. "When preparing for *Seventeen Years*, I did a lot of difficult jobs, including visiting 17 prisons to learn the real life there. All these things pushed me to conform to the system."

Communicating with authorities and finding a peaceful way of telling his story was the solution. *Dada's Dance* passed the test successfully without a single cut, succeeding where another script, about young criminals, failed before.

"It doesn't mean that *Dada's Dance* is not heavy, no, the only difference between these two scripts is that I hoped to tell Dada's story in a comparably quieter way," Zhang says. "I don't know whether the audience can understand me or not, but whatever the case, it's still better that your own people can watch this movie in the cinema and not from pirated DVDs."

Does that mean, as some older fans suggest, he has given up his fighting spirit? Zhang's answer is no. The 46-year-old director sees himself as unchanged during the past 20 years. He shot the first music video in China and even produced advertisements. In the old days, religion controlled art, dictating what gets produced and what doesn't; then politicians had the reins; now there is commerce.

"But I have my principles, such as never overestimate nor look down on yourself," Zhang says. "The first thing a director should care about is the self-satisfaction of communicating with the world, then the feedback of the audience. Business is something you have to work with and fight against. But as for being a fighter ... that was an icon made by the media. I have always done things the same way."

Why continue making movies? The director says that because we are not gods, we do not know what will happen next but rather should constantly try to imagine the future.

Zhang asks for another whiskey and the topic finally turns to his drug use.

"I did it, it was a mistake and I gave it up," he says. "That's it. People thought that Zhang Yuan was f__ked, but look at me now, I'm alive, continuing to do everything I used to, nothing changed. It may also have been a good lesson that taught me this: drugs don't work."

Octogenarian still ablaze with human passion

By Charles Zhu

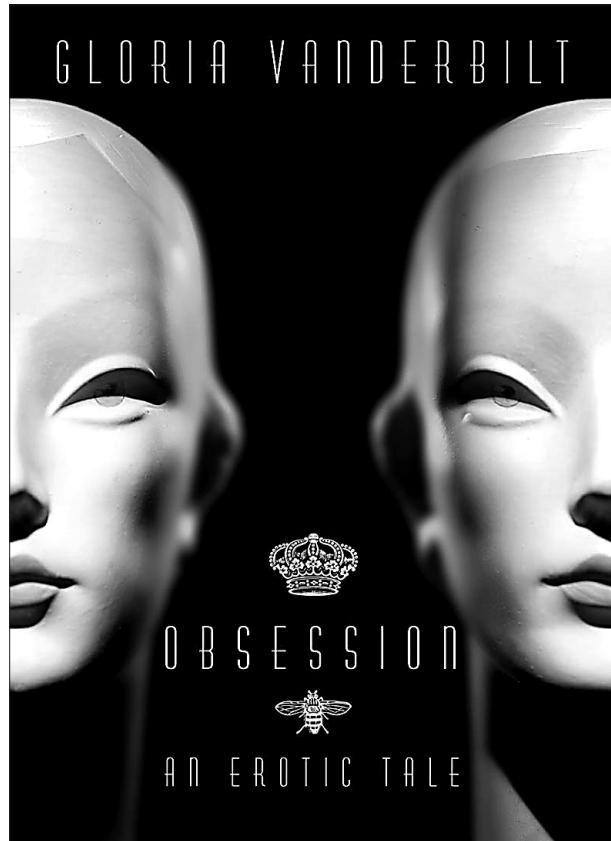
Can you imagine an octogenarian producing not just a novel but an extraordinary one about human passion? Eighty-five-year-old Gloria Vanderbilt, who used to sell jeans on television, published *Obsession: An Erotic Tale* (160pp, Ecco, \$9.99) last June. Joyce Carol Oates, one of the most important contemporary female writers in the US, called it "a remarkable tapestry of human passion – an interior world of highly charged erotic mysteries that teasingly suggest, but ever elude, decoding."

It is the story of Priscilla Bingham, the widow of a famous avant-garde architect who, after her husband's death, finds a box of letters, wrapped in magenta grosgrain ribbon, revealing in great detail his secret sex life. These letters are from Bee, a mysterious woman who may be a figment of Priscilla's imagination.

Vanderbilt looks at least 25 years younger, like a lady in her early 60s. She has a broad, sweet smile typical of a Brahman and still wears a charming face with virtually no wrinkles. In addition to writing, she likes to paint and make collages.

In an interview at her home in Beekman Place on Manhattan's Upper East Side, she said, "I'm always in love, that's one of my secrets. I'm determined to be the best I can be for as long as I can, and when I'm not, I have my plans. I walk a lot and watch my diet. That's the key of it. I've always had a lot of energy."

Vanderbilt has had four marriages and amorous liaisons with Howard Hughes, Gene Kelly, Marlon Brando and Frank



Sinatra, among others. Her rich experiences in life made it possible for her to write the novel. She said she was not at all embarrassed about the openness of her book, adding, "I don't think age has anything to do with what you write about. The only thing that would embarrass me is bad writing, and the only thing that really concerned me was my children. You know how children can be about their parents. But mine are very intelligent and supportive."

Her son, CNN newscaster Anderson Cooper, has read *Obsession*'s manuscript and thinks her mother is "actually pretty

unique, and there's not much she does that's surprising anymore. At 85, whatever she wants to write is fine with me," he said.

Vanderbilt said: "I have two very WASPy friends who are quite disapproving. One of them said, 'I think it's going to ruin your reputation.' But the book couldn't have been done any other way, because then it would have been boring. I think that all the very graphic sex is true of self-exploration and true of fantasy. I think it's poetic."

The idea to write *Obsession* came to her when she was browsing at the Strand one afternoon and saw a book titled *If Ever Two Were One*. The title instantly became her first sentence. Vanderbilt's mother had a twin, and the idea of twins and dyads has always made her crazy. There are many pairs, doubles, mirrors in *Obsession*.

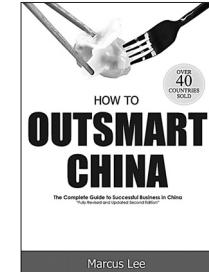
Vanderbilt said that the writing, once started, went very smoothly. "It was as if I were channeling it," she said. "I do think all art is autobiographical, and I do think I know quite a bit about women. I don't know anything about men."

She said Priscilla, who is sexually conservative and frustrated, is not her alter ego; that would be Bee, an orphan who is very sexy. "Bee is me, of course. Absolutely. If you've never had a mother or a father, you grow up seeking something you're never going to find, ever. You seek it in love and in people and in beauty." The author has finally found it in the novel she has created at such an advanced age.

Vanderbilt is planning to write a sequel. "I can sort of see it," she said, "but not clearly yet."

CNPIEC Bookstore book listing

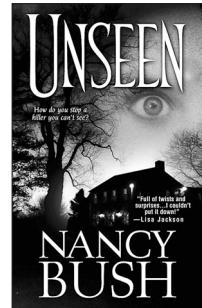
The China National Publication Import and Export Corporation's (CNPIEC) bookstore recommends these new arrivals to *Beijing Today* readers.



How to Outsmart China: The Complete Guide to Successful Business in China

By Marcus Lee, 310pp, Hampton Court Holdings, \$35.00

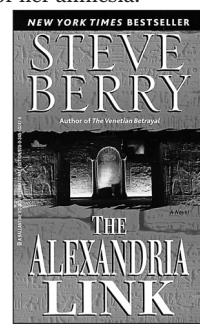
More than a theory, this is the most practical China business book on the market. It is a personal account from a foreigner who spent years working and living inside China, answering all possible questions you may have about doing business here.



Unseen

By Nancy Bush, 384pp, Zebra Books, \$6.99

Bush pens an eerie suspense novel woven with a compelling romance and a touch of the supernatural. In rural Oregon, Gemma LaPorte wakes up in a hospital with a fragmented memory. Deputy Will Tanninger tells Gemma that she is a prime suspect in a hit-and-run that critically injured a child molester. As Gemma's memories begin to return, she finds writings she had made about brain function and wonders whether her concussion was the only reason for her amnesia.



The Alexandria Link: A Novel

By Steve Berry, 512pp, Ballantine Books, \$9.99

Cotton Malone retired from the high-risk world of elite operatives for the US Justice Department to lead the low-key life of a rare-book dealer. But his quiet existence is shattered when he receives an anonymous email: "You have something I want. You're the only person on Earth who knows where to find it. Go get it. You have 72 hours. If I don't hear from you, you will be childless." His horrified ex-wife confirms that the threat is real: their teenage son has been kidnapped. When Malone's Copenhagen bookshop is burned to the ground, it becomes brutally clear that those responsible will stop at nothing to get what they want. And what they want is nothing less than the lost Library of Alexandria.

(By He Jianwei)

Futurist's view of China's trends

By Han Manman

Bestselling American author John Naisbitt, who built an international reputation by predicting future economic and social trends, turns his attention to the future of China with his new book, *China's Megatrends: The Eight Pillars of a New Society* (221pp, China Industry & Commerce Union Press, 32 yuan).

The book, co-authored by his wife Doris, analyzes China's development model from eight aspects, what the couple call "the eight pillars of a new society." It traces the rise of China in 30 years from an impoverished nation to the third largest economy in the world.

Naisbitt, already in his 80s, said he tried his best to present a true and dynamic portrait of China to the outside world. His research was based on more than 40 years of observation and study of China, which began with his first visit to the country in 1967.

In the book, Naisbitt said an essential idea is that China is creating an entirely new social and economic system, which challenges the notion that Western democracy is the only model of government that can provide social and economic rights.

In the first paragraph in the preface, Naisbitt raises the question, Why are there so many democratic Western countries that cannot achieve rapid economic development like China?

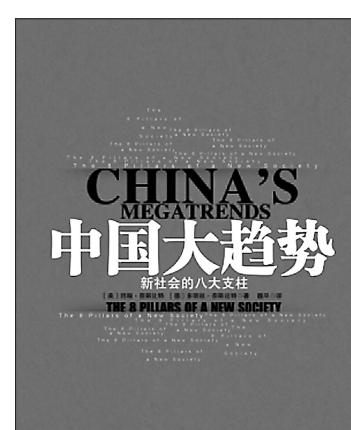
"The very important thing we try to convey to the West is that this is not a shift or adaptation, but the creation of a totally new social and economic system," Naisbitt said. "How did this system get built? What were the underpinnings? That's how we moved to the 'pillar' principles. That's when we really started to get involved in the last couple of years."

Doris said when the West looks at China, it always does so through Western values and from the perspective of Western history and the Western political system.

"We judge China with those values in our heads, always measuring it against the West. But that does not give a picture of the real China," Doris said. "The only way to understand China is to look from inside-out, not from the outside into China. China needs to be judged by its own values and its own history, because its values are based on its own history."

Doris said one of the purposes of *China's Megatrends* is to give the West information necessary to understand China on its own terms.

In the book, the Naisbitts say competition has spurred China's progress and, most importantly, the Chinese have found the principles most suitable for its growth. They also express confidence in the country's future and say the growth of China's prosperity is far from over. A great future



lies ahead. They believe that with rapid economic development, China will exert its unique influence in the world.

The German version of *China's Megatrends* is slated for publication before the Frankfurt Book Fair in October. The English version will be released in January 2010.

As the world's leading futurist, John Naisbitt wrote his bestselling *Megatrends* in 1982. It has since become one of the biggest successes in the publishing world and was on the New York Times Best Seller list for two years. The book has been published in 57 countries and has sold more than 9 million copies.



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Inexpensive wedding gowns

By Annie Wei

Shopping malls are now packed with future brides and grooms excitedly choosing their outfit for their special day during the October holiday.

Although more and more Chinese women dream of a wedding gown by Vera Wang or Vivienne Westwood, real-life budgets only allow for something closer to home.

China's thriving textile manufacturing industry offers brides many choices.

Beijing Today checked these out at Wukesong Wedding Dress Mall and talked to some brides for shopping tips.

The wedding dress shops are in the same building as the camera and camera accessory stores – a relatively spacious two-story gray building.

Low quality and outdated Western-style wedding gowns cost around 400 yuan. Those made of better material, with better craftsmanship and design, start at 1,000 yuan.

It is important to bargain at this place; shoppers can usually slash the price in half by doing so. This will bring the price of low-quality dresses to 200 yuan, mid-quality ones to 500 yuan and the best designs to 800 yuan.

Chinese-style gowns are also available at 300 to 600 yuan.

Xiong Li, a 27-year-old magazine writer who will fly back to her hometown of Changsha,



At Wukesong wedding dress mall

Hunan Province, for her wedding, bought three gowns at Wukesong. She advised brides to try on wedding dresses at shops like Xidan 109 or wedding photo studios before heading to Wukesong.

"After trying them on there, you'll have a better idea of which styles suit you, and you'll just have to find similar ones at Wukesong," she said.

Xiong suggests visiting different shops before making a choice.

This will help brides negotiate the best price and service; vendors should be able to make minor alterations to make sure the dress fits perfectly.

"With a budget of 1,000 yuan, you can easily make yourself a stunning bride," she said.

A small white lie may also help protect shoppers' wallets: once a shopkeeper spots a bride, the price of a dress may skyrocket, so some people pretend to be retailers.

Bridal veils, gloves and tiaras are also available at Wukesong. But refrain from visiting the place on weekends; it will be very hard to bargain when the mall is swarming with customers.

Wukesong Wedding Dress Mall

Where: 40 Wukesong Lu, Haidian District
Open: 9 am – 6 pm
Tel: 8811 9728



A good quality dress costs above 1,000 yuan.

Photos by Huang Xiao

Hunting for bargain fashion

There are many stores along Zhangzizhong Lu (left). Four piece hand puppet set costs 80 yuan (right).

Photos by Huang Xiao

By Annie Wei

Zhangzizhong Lu, an area popular among music lovers and home to the live music venue Yugongyishan, draws many young shoppers on weekend afternoons. Ping'an Avenue is lined with small shops that offer clothes, shoes and fashion accessories for a student's or young professional's budget.

The atmosphere in these shops is a far cry from that of department stores: many have the stuffy smell of a warehouse, products are piled at random all around, and none of the clothes have been pressed. Most stores do not have a name or a clear

idea of their street address.

Here you can find skinny jeans from brands like H&M, DKNY and Country Road for 100 yuan, fluffy winter slippers (35 yuan), gym outfits (35 yuan for tops; 55 yuan for bottoms), socks (10 yuan for three pairs), panty hose (starting at 10 yuan), Korean-designed scarves (10 yuan) and big and fluffy bath towels (60 to 70 yuan).

For the little ones in the family, there are children's pajamas (45 to 55 yuan), baby clothes and booties (starting at 10 yuan) and toys (less than 100 yuan).

Near a China Construction Bank is a bag store,



which usually shuts down whenever it does business with wholesalers. The store is owned by a lady who says her products come from her own factories. The bags, which cost from 55 to 300 yuan, have good designs despite their inexpensive price.

Some stores have been in the area for decades. The owners are from Tianjin, the home of small textile factories in northeast China. Jeans go for 150 yuan; a few years ago they were a third of the price.

Shoppers may chance upon brand name items like Diesel dresses and Diesel silk tops (180 to 220 yuan).

There is not much room to bargain: if you complain they are too expensive, the owner may ignore you or laugh at you and point out that department stores sell them at 10 times the price.

Prices are in the same ballpark as the zoo market's, but they are cheaper than Yashow's. Visitors will probably find similar things at Yashow or the zoo market, but here at least shopkeepers allow you to try on the clothes.

Zhangzizhong Lu stores

Where: Shops start at 2 Zhangzizhong Lu, Dongcheng District
Open: 10 am – 6 pm



The Kartell store at The Grand Summit

Furniture brand presents ballet flats

By Annie Wei

Ballet flats are popular for several reasons: they are comfortable, stylish and easy to match with clothes.

To meet the demands of today's fashion, Kartell, an Italian furniture designer, has teamed up with an Italian clothing company to present the Glue Cinderella collection of ballet flats. The shoes are available at Kartell's China flagship store at The Grand Summit.

Kartell's ballet flats are made of plastic, a material for which the company is well-known. The shoes are light, mold to the feet and come in "hot" candy colors.

Quality workmanship and a brand name do not come cheap: a pair costs 1,380 yuan.

But the heavy price tag does not seem to have deterred many; a shop assistant told *Beijing Today* some colors are already out of popular sizes. Fashionistas collecting ballet flats should definitely check out the brand.

While you are at the store, you may as well take a look at its furniture pieces. The prices are also something to marvel at: plastic chairs start at 5,000 yuan; a sofa that can seat only one person costs 10,000 yuan.

Much cheaper versions are available on Taobao.com, but quality is not guaranteed.

Kartell

Where: Kartell, The Grand Summit, 19 Dongfang Dong Lu, Chaoyang District
Open: 10 am – 9 pm
Tel: 8595 8668



Kartell's new design – ballet flats, 1,380 yuan per pair
Photos by Huang Xiao

A whole-day meal challenge

Quest for appetizing, inexpensive meals at the CBD

By Wang Yu

Working in the CBD puts you at the center of the city's dynamic dining scene. But weekday lunches can be tricky because of time constraints, which in turn narrows the selection of appetizing yet inexpensive meals. The key is imagination and some leg work, we learned.

Anna Liu, who works in a foreign company with offices at Chaowai SOHO, has done some sleuthing to zap excitement back into her lunch hours. "You can actually find a lot of inexpensive set meals in the restaurants at Chaowai SOHO and SOHO Shangdu, which is just across the street," she says. "A la carte dishes cost a bit more, which you can reserve for dinner."

Beijing Today followed Liu around one weekday afternoon to learn from an expert.

12 noon

Shunkouliu

This chain restaurant, which serves Shaanxi dishes and has a number of branches in the CBD, is high up on the list of office workers' favorite lunch destinations. Its inexpensive rice noodles have made a fan out of Liu.

Located at the basement of SOHO Shangdu, the restaurant is spacious and is a more stylish version of a fast food store: there are no counters in the middle of the room or electronic billboards on the wall. Under each table is a drawer that holds sheets of menu paper. Diners can take these with them in case they want to order for takeout.

Compared with other Chinese cuisines, Shaanxi food consists of a lot of noodle dishes. Shunkouliu's noodle offerings, with different flavors of soup, include standard beef noodles (17 yuan), spicy beef noodles (17 yuan) and Shunkouliu minced noodles (17 yuan). All the noodles are hand-made.

Cold dishes such as spinach with peanuts (10 yuan) help to counteract the soups' spiciness.

Liu also recommends the restaurant's rice dishes. One to try is the sweet-spicy Shunkouliu rice (13 yuan), which consists of minced pork and preserved Sichuan pickle and chili. The Thai rice used in the dishes also adds joy into your mouth.

Shunkouliu

Where: B1-106 North Tower, SOHO Shangdu, 8 Dongdaqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

Open: 11 am – 10 pm

Tel: 5910 1616



Shunkouliu minced noodles, 17 yuan



Spinach with peanuts, 10 yuan

Xianghui Renjia

This Hunan restaurant is a new addition to Chaowai SOHO's dining establishments. Liu discovered it by chance on the building's third floor, among still unoccupied rooms.

Xianghui's dishes are limited, but they are so mouth-wateringly good they make up for the lack of variety. If you are willing to forgo health experts' advice for a day, order the cured meat (28 yuan) or steamed pork with preserved vegetables (22 yuan), which are made sumptuous by the fatty meat.

The chef is an expert at dry-pot cooking, which produces dry, rich-tasting and oily dishes popular in Hunan Province. You can throw into the pot a variety of meats.

Liu, like many young ladies, is staying away from meat; she prefers the healthier dry-pot-fried tofu skin (28 yuan). The pieces of skin are tender and infused with the flavor of chili and fermented soybeans. Another healthy choice is dry pot Chinese cabbage (18 yuan).

The a la carte dishes are a bit expensive for some office workers, so Xianghui has put together set meals – with two main dishes, rice and a soup – for 15 yuan or so.

The restaurant staff says food for lunch takeout should be ordered before 11 am.

Xianghui Renjia

Where: B-3016 Chaowai SOHO, B6, Chaowai Dajie, Chaoyang District

Open: 11 am – 9 pm

Tel: 5869 6694



Dry pot Chinese cabbage, 18 yuan

Photos by Song Nannan

11:30 pm

AILI

For afternoon tea, Liu took us to AILI, a bakery where she gets coffee or milk tea. At the center of the shop are two racks filled with cakes and freshly baked bread. They also sell birthday cakes.

"To me, this shop is precious for its wonderful milk tea," Liu says. The brown sugar milk tea (6 yuan) is ideal for people who do not like their tea too sweet. A warm cup of this brew will make a good companion in the cold late autumn and winter.

For coffee drinkers, there is cappuccino (9 yuan), cafe mocha (9 yuan) and latte (8 yuan). VIP card-holders will be given a cup for their exclusive use and can purchase drinks at reduced prices.

AILI also offers five types of set meals. Liu's favorite is the grilled cheese sandwich (8 yuan), which makes for a perfect lunch-on-the-go.

AILI

Where: 2105-2121 North Tower, SOHO Shangdu, 8 Dongdaqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

Open: 24 hours

Tel: 5869 9400



Grilled cheese sandwich, 8 yuan

Photo by Song Nannan

7:30 pm

Lanren Chufang

Aptly named "lazy person's kitchen," this restaurant offers nourishment to employees who are too tired to cook after a long day at work.

The restaurant, which opened just this summer, concocted ice congees as its initial offering – and offered a buy-one-get-one-free deal. The sweetish Lanren ice congee (10 yuan) includes rice, corn, medlar and Chinese dates.

There are also hot congees to fight the autumn night chills.

Another house specialty is beef with hot green pepper (38 yuan); the beef is tender and not very spicy.

We recommend trying Lanren's century egg and pork congee (10 yuan). The dish does not contain a lot of meat, but we could not fault the flavor.

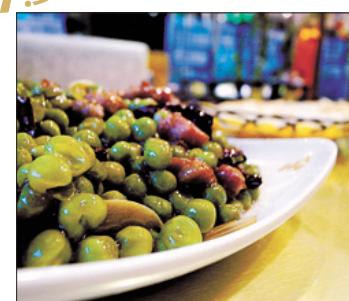
Lanren's cold dishes, particularly the vegetables, taste a bit heavy, but we were still happy with the overall result of our visit.

Lanren Chufang

Where: 2112 North Tower, SOHO Shangdu, 8 Dongdaqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

Open: 24 hours

Tel: 5869 6573



Beef with hot green pepper, 38 yuan



Sweetish lanren ice congee, 10 yuan

Photos by Song Nannan

Modern Sky Festival is back with punk and rock

By Wang Yu

2009 is the year of music festivals in China. More than 20 of them have already been held; some were truly music utopias, while others were nothing more than promotional activities for the local travel industry.

But there are three more months to go in the year, and Modern Sky Records is planning a follow-up to its amazing Strawberry Festival in May – Modern Sky Festival is to be held during the National Day holiday, from October 4 to 7.

It is expected to be an international event: besides Chinese stars such as P.K.14, Queen Sea Big Sharks and New Pants, half of the artists in the line-up are from abroad.

Punk music fans will be excited to know that Buzzcocks, an English band and one of the genre's most influential, will do the finale on the third day.

The group thought its catchy name – which comes from the excitement of playing onstage (buzz) and a Manchester slang for "youngster" (cock) – captured the excitement of the Sex Pistols and



the punk scene in the mid-1970s.

Buzzcocks has accomplished more than its members imagined. With a career spanning more than three decades, the band has had a big influence on the Manchester music scene, independent record labels, punk rock, power pop, pop punk and indie rock. It has achieved commercial success with singles that fused pop craftsmanship with rapid-fire punk energy.

Modern Sky Festival will also give dance freaks reason to rejoice. Radio 4, a New York

disco punk band, will rule the main stage on the second night. Formed in Brooklyn in 1999, the group describes its sound as "made in New York, about New York and sounds like New York." The members' lively punk numbers combined with their militant political stance draws a strong comparison with The Clash.

International Noise Conspiracy, a Swedish hardcore punk group, will also join the merry-making. The band said it wanted to oppose music's use as "a spectacle" with its debut album

The First Conspiracy – a concept taken from Guy Debord's book *The Society of the Spectacle*. Besides their philosophical thoughts, the musicians offer rock and roll in its purest form.

On the performers' list is British Sea Power, an indie rock band from Brighton, England, whose style ranges from the sweeping, often epic guitar pop sound to the visceral and angular. The group, which is often compared to Joy Division, has gained a following in China through the Internet; fans are eager to hear its fuzzy guitar tones live after its successful performance at this year's Glastonbury Festival.

Modern Sky Festival

Where: Chaoyang Park, 1 Chaoyanggongyuan Nan Lu, Chaoyang District

When: October 4-7

Admission: 100 yuan for one-day pass; 320 yuan for four-day pass (advance purchase); 120 for one-day pass at the door

Tel: 400 680 6840

Upcoming

Exhibition

Essence Contemporary Work from Songzhuang

Where: Artist Village Gallery, North of Renzhuang, Songzhuang, Tongzhou District
When: October 1-31, daily, 10 am - 6 pm
(reservation necessary)
Admission: 20 yuan
Tel: 6959 8343

Stage in October

Concert

Rundfunk Blasorchester Leipzig

Where: Forbidden City Music Hall (inside Zhongshan Park), 4 Zhonghua Lu, Dongcheng District

When: October 4, 7:30 pm
Admission: 50-580 yuan
Tel: 6559 8306

The Vienna Boys Choir Asia Tour 2009

Where: Forbidden City Music Hall (inside Zhongshan Park), 4 Zhonghua Lu, Dongcheng District

When: October 10-11, 7:30 pm
Admission: 180-680 yuan
Tel: 6559 8306

Strings and Keyboard Collective – Chamber Music II

Where: Beijing Concert Hall, 1 Bei Xinhua Jie, Xicheng District
When: October 14, 7:30 pm
Admission: 50-150 yuan
Tel: 5166 1145

Sounds of Finland – Midori Meets Sibelius

Where: Beijing Concert Hall, 1 Bei Xinhua Jie, Xicheng District
When: October 16, 7:30 pm
Admission: 50-150 yuan
Tel: 5166 1145

Sounds of Africa – Boys Choir of Kenya

Where: Poly Theater, 14 Dongzhimen Nan Dajie, Dongcheng District
When: October 25, 7:30 pm
Admission: 50-150 yuan
Tel: 6551 8058

Dance

San Francisco Ballet China Tour 2009

Where: Poly Theater, 14 Dongzhimen Nan Dajie, Dongcheng District
When: October 1-3, 7:30 pm
Admission: 180-1,680 yuan
Tel: 6551 8058

The Taming of the Shrew by the Stuttgart Ballet

Where: Opera House of the National Center for the Performing Arts, 2 Xi Chang'an Jie, Xicheng District
When: October 9-11, 7:30 pm
Admission: 120-800 yuan
Tel: 6655 0000

Opera

Dragon and Phoenix – Peking Opera

Where: Chang'an Theater, 7 Jianguomen Nei Dajie, Dongcheng District
When: October 16, 7:30 pm
Admission: 100-980 yuan
Tel: 6510 1155

Shi

Where: Opera House of the National Center for the Performing Arts, 2 Xi Chang'an Jie, Xicheng District
When: October 28 – November 5, 7:30 pm
Admission: 80-880 yuan
Tel: 6655 0000

(By Jackie Zhang)

Friday, September 25

Exhibition

Look Ahead Look Back – Pu Jie Solo Exhibition

Where: Today Art Museum, Pingdi Community, 32 Baizhan Lu, Chaoyang District

When: Until October 7, daily, 10 am - 5 pm

Admission: 10 yuan; 5 yuan for students

Tel: 5876 0600



Shan Shui – Nature on the Horizon of Art

Where: Beijing Center for the Arts, 23 Qianmen Dong Dajie, Dongcheng District

When: Until October 18, daily except Monday, 10 am - 10 pm

Admission: Free

Nightlife

City Sound Works – Cao Yang

Where: MAO Livehouse, 111 Gulou Dong Dajie, Dongcheng District

When: 9 pm
Admission: 50 yuan
Tel: 6402 5080

The Verse

Where: Jianghu Bar, 7 Dongmianhua Hutong, Jiaodaokou Nan Dajie, Dongcheng District

When: 8 pm
Admission: Free
Tel: 6576 5987

Movie

Paris, Texas

Where: Lele Bar (50 meters east of Communication University of China's north gate), Dingfuzhuang, Chaoyang Lu, Chaoyang District

When: 9:30 pm
Admission: 50 yuan
Tel: 6401 4611

Movie

Xiaoshengwu Band

Where: The park opposite Exit A of Zhangzizhonglu subway station (Line 5), Dongcheng District
When: 3 pm
Admission: 30 yuan

Movie



Exhibition

Green Art Fair 2009

Where: Exhibition Hall of China World Trade Center, 1 Jianguomen Wai Dajie, Chaoyang District

When: Until September 29, daily, 11 am - 9 pm

Admission: 100 yuan

Tel: 6505 2288

Martin Parr in Beijing

A member of the prestigious Magnum photo agency since 1994, Martin Parr is Britain's foremost contemporary photographer and has been in the business for 35 years. This retrospective on China will immerse the spectator in Parr's viewpoint through a selection of 300 photographs from the series Common Sense, The Last Resort, Small World, Luxury and Bored Couples.

Where: Paris-Beijing Photo Gallery, 798 Art District, 2 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: Until November 9, daily, 10 am - 6 pm

Admission: Free

Tel: 5978 9262

Nightlife

Xiaofei and Daxiang

Where: Jianghu Bar, 7 Dongmianhua Hutong, Jiaodaokou Nan Dajie, Dongcheng District

When: 9 pm

Admission: 20 yuan

(includes a soft drink)

Where: Jianghu Bar, 7

Exhibition

Dongmianhua Hutong, Jiaodaokou Nan Dajie, Dongcheng District

When: 9:30 pm
Admission: Free
Tel: 6401 4611

Memento

Where: No. 3 Club, 43 Beisanhuan Xi Lu, Haidian District

When: 2 pm

Admission: 20 yuan

Tel: 8211 5288

Saturday, September 26

Exhibition

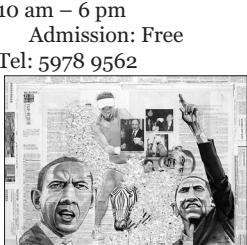
Visual Temperature – Cao Hui Solo Exhibition

Where: PIFO New Art Gallery, 798 Art District, 2 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: Until October 25, daily except Monday, 10 am - 6 pm

Admission: Free

Tel: 5978 9562



Just Paper Group Exhibition

Where: Jiu Shi Space, 798 Art District, 2 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang

Movie

Ten

Where: Lady Book Salon, 69 Chengfu Lu, Haidian District

When: 7 pm

Admission: Free

Tel: 6270 1928

Nightlife

Based on the True Story – Liu Er's New Album

Where: Wild Strawberry Cafe, 52 Houhai Nanyan, Xicheng District

When: 9 pm

Admission: 30 yuan

Tel: 8328 4250

Zhang Qianqian

Where: Jianghu Bar, 7 Dongmianhua Hutong, Jiaodaokou Nan Dajie, Dongcheng District

When: 9 pm

Admission: 40 yuan

30 yuan for students

Tel: 6401 4611

Just Paper Group Exhibition

Where: Jiu Shi Space, 798 Art District, 2 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang

When: Until October 25, daily, 10 am - 6 pm

Admission: Free

Tel: 5978 9262

Nightlife

Xiaofei and Daxiang

Where: Jianghu Bar, 7

Sunday, September 27

Exhibition

Green Art Fair 2009

Where: Exhibition Hall of China World Trade Center, 1 Jianguomen Wai Dajie, Chaoyang District

When: Until September 29, daily, 11 am - 9 pm

Admission: 100 yuan

Tel: 6505 2288

Martin Parr in Beijing

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Nightlife

Xiaofei and Daxiang

Where: Jianghu Bar, 7

When: 9 pm

Admission: 20 yuan

(includes a soft drink)

Tel: 8211 5288

Shrug off shoulder pain

By Venus Lee

A full tear of the rotator cuff, while painful, can be easily repaired with surgery. Patients who suffer from chronic shoulder pain, on the other hand, have no quick fix. They are usually advised to get shockwave treatment in the hospital, but a new study suggests other therapies may produce better results.

Shockwave treatment does little for shoulder pain

A team of researchers based in Oslo, Norway compared the effectiveness of radial extracorporeal shockwave treatment (low to medium energy impulses delivered into the tissue) with supervised exercises in patients with shoulder pain. The results show that shockwave treatment, which is widely used, is not as effective as people imagined in relieving chronic shoulder pain.

The study involved 104 men and women between ages 18 and 70 attending the outpatient clinic at Ullevaal University Hospital in Oslo with shoulder pain lasting at least three months.

Participants were randomized to receive either radial extracorporeal shockwave treatment (one session weekly for four to six weeks) or supervised exercises (two 45-minute sessions weekly for up to 12 weeks).

Both groups were similar at the start of the study with regard to age, education, dominant arm affected and pain duration.

All patients were monitored at six, 12 and 18 weeks and were advised not to have any additional treatment except analgesics (including anti-inflammatory drugs) during the follow-up period. Pain and disability were measured using a recognized scoring index. After 18 weeks, 64 percent of patients (32 individuals) in the exercise group achieved a reduction in shoulder pain and disability scores, compared with 36 percent (18 individuals) in the shockwave treatment group.

More patients in the exercise group returned to work, while more patients in the shockwave treatment group had additional treatment after 12 weeks, suggesting they were less satisfied.

These findings are in agreement with results from previous trials recommending exercise therapy and do not strengthen the evidence for extracorporeal shockwave treatment, say the authors.



Potential causes of shoulder pain

Shoulder pain can stem from many causes. In some cases, shoulder pain is localized, meaning it is confined to a specific area. In other cases, pain may be more widespread, affecting areas throughout the shoulder and even into the neck, back or arm, said Wang Changhai, chief physician of Spinal and Orthopedic Department of the People's Hospital of Peking University.

Shoulder pain varies depending on the nature and severity of the injury. Common causes of shoulder pain include:

1. Dislocation. Shoulder dislocations are the most common major dislocations in the body. "In most cases, a dislocation occurs when some force, such as a fall, pulls the shoulder outward, or an extreme rotation of the shoulder pulls the ball of the humerus – the long bone of the arm extending from the shoulder to the elbow – out of the shallow socket," Wang said.

2. Separation. This occurs in the area where the collarbone and the shoulder blade meet. Ligaments that hold the joint together may become partially or completely torn, causing the outer end of the collarbone to slip so that it does not properly join with the shoulder blade. Blows to the shoulder or falling with an outstretched hand are the most common causes of shoulder separations.

3. Rotator cuff tear. The rotator cuff is made up of muscles and tendons that connect the humerus to the shoulder blade. Tendons in the rotator cuff can become inflamed and tear as a result of overuse, wear and tear associated with aging or an accident such as a collision. "Sports that require repeated overhead motion and occupations that require heavy lifting are primary sources of rotator cuff tears," Wang said.

4. Tendinitis, bursitis and impingement syndrome. These three closely related conditions can occur separately or in combination. Wang said repetitive motions involving overuse of the shoulder and jobs

that require excessive overhead reaching can irritate or wear down tendons, muscles and surrounding tissues. In addition, they may be caused by diseases such as rheumatoid arthritis.

5. Fracture. A partial or total crack of a bone, frequently as the result of a fall or blow to the shoulder. Fractures often involve the clavicle or the neck of the humerus, which is the area just below the ball.

6. Arthritis of the shoulder. A degenerative disease caused by either wear and tear of the cartilage (osteoarthritis) or inflammation of one or more joints (rheumatoid arthritis). Arthritis also can affect supporting structures, including muscles, tendons and ligaments.

7. Osteophytes (bone spurs). These are often caused by degenerative changes such as osteoarthritis. Bony projections can restrict the shoulder's range of motion and cause pain.

8. Frozen shoulder. Also known as adhesive capsulitis, this condition causes pain that severely restricts the patient's ability to move the shoulder. Patients may be unable to raise their arm without feeling significant pain, and stiffness and pain may worsen at night. Injuries are a common source of frozen shoulder, but it also can result from rheumatic diseases and shoulder surgery. "People with diabetes, stroke, lung disease, rheumatoid arthritis and heart disease are at greater risk for frozen shoulder," Wang said.

9. Pinched nerve. Nerves can be compressed throughout the body. Examples that affect the shoulder include impingement of the axillary nerve in the armpit, which can result from use of crutches, and subscapular nerve entrapment, an uncommon condition caused by restriction of the subscapular nerve.

10. Heavy packs. Hefty or poorly positioned backpacks used by schoolchildren and oversized purses, briefcases or luggage used by adults can injure the shoulders and back.

Relief options for shoulder pain

Shoulder pain accounts for 16 percent of all reported muscle and joint pain, second only to lower-back discomfort, but it is usually ignored. "The complex joints require at least as much attention as the body's other high-maintenance areas," Wang said.

In many cases, shoulder pain cannot be prevented (e.g., injury, degenerative disorder). However, people can take steps to reduce the likelihood of new injuries, or to prevent old injuries from recurring:

1. Rest. Reduce or stop using the injured area for 48 hours.

2. Cryotherapy. "Put an ice pack on the injured area for 20 minutes at a time, four to eight times daily. At least 15 minutes should separate treatments.

But do not apply ice directly to the

skin – use a towel, ice bag, etc.," Wang said.

3. Right posture. Use proper technique when participating in athletics to prevent shoulder problems, and practice good posture and ergonomics at work and home to reduce the risk of repetitive strain injuries and sudden trauma.

4. Compression. Wrap the shoulder with bandages, such as an elastic wrap, to reduce swelling.

5. Elevation. Keep the injured area elevated above the heart. "You can use a pillow to help elevate the shoulder area," he said.

6. Exercise. Work with a physical therapist or physician to design an exercise routine that can stretch and strengthen rotator cuff tendons and shoulder muscles. Complete stretching exercises before and after athletics to reduce the chance of shoulder pain.

CFP Photo



By Zhao Hongyi

The China Science and Technology Museum's new location opened its doors to the public last Sunday, three years after its construction began. Situated on the northeastern part of Olympic Green, neighboring the Bird's Nest and Water Cube, the building is nine stories high and has an exhibition area of 48,000 square meters, making it one of the largest science and technology centers open to the public.

The museum has more than 800 items on display, most of which are interactive. It plans to set up themed exhibitions every year, made up of objects designed and developed within the museum itself, said Cui Xidong, chief of its Science and Life Hall.

The building, divided into four themed areas, expects to receive 30,000 visitors a day. It provides sign language assistance for the disabled.

Kingdom of the curious and the trailblazing

The wonderful world of China's Science and Technology Museum



Helix of Life

Four floors of wonder

The first thing that will greet visitors who enter from the museum's east entrance is the gigantic inner functioning of a clock, made up of wheels and bearings, tacked to the wall. A museum guide said this is to remind people of the value of time and how science and technology has developed with time.

Of the building's nine floors, only the first to the fourth are open to the public. The rest of the stories, according to the tour guide, will be used as offices and laboratories for the creation of new items for display in the future. Ninety percent of the museum's displays are interactive, which means they respond to visitors' voice or touch.

The first floor introduces ancient Chinese achievements in science and technology, such as the invention of gunpowder, dis-



Wheel of Time

Photo by Zhao Hongyi

covers in astronomy, silk production, porcelain and china manufacturing, and hydraulics. Displays include the ancient irrigation system invented two thousand years ago.

A huge Children's Amusement Park, which includes "forest exploration," "happy farmland," "science castle" and "creative studio," can be found on the northwest corner of the second floor. It is the most popular part of the museum, our guide said. The first floor, named Paradise of Science, is the best place for visitors between ages three and 10.

The next floor, called Discovery and Exploration, demonstrates the magic of science and technology, showing the relationship between nature and humans in the hope of sparking people's interests and creativity. On the east end

are exhibits on "magical mathematics," "the elegance of voice" and "the mystery of life." The west side has displays that discuss topics such as the cosmos, new materials, magnetism, lights and shadows.

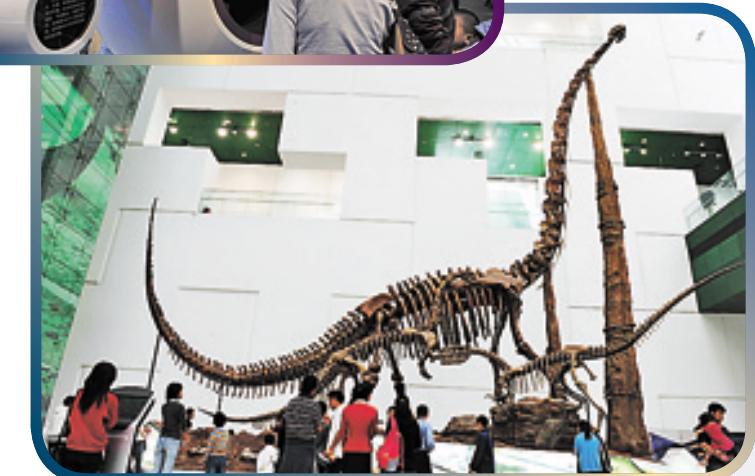
The third floor is Science and Life, which illustrates the impact and benefits science and technology have on people's daily life, in fields such as transportation, information systems, food, clothing and health. There are displays on robotics, magnetic railways, the Internet, HIV/AIDS and energy conservation.

The fourth floor, named Challenges and the Future, discusses the exploration of outer space and oceans, new materials and alternative energy. Items on this floor include equipment used in China's space missions, maps of areas on the moon and Mars, sketches of farmlands for the future cultivation of foods under the ocean, instruments that record desertification and new materials like nanochips. Museum signs list the challenges in these new frontiers of science and technology.

A robot displays guidelines for a healthy life.



A robot displays guidelines for a healthy life.



Dinosaur fossils



The new China Science and Technology Museum opened this month.

CFP Photos

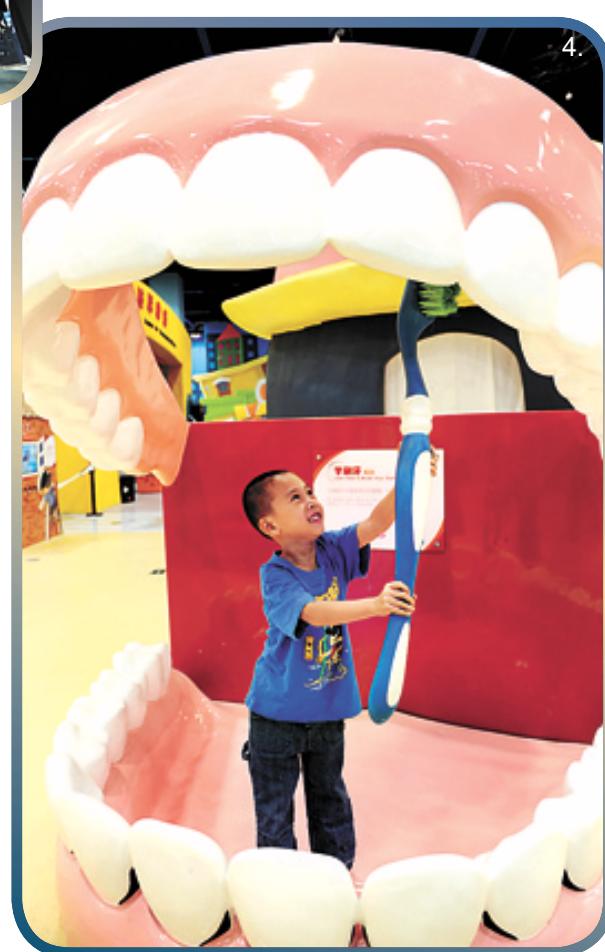
Continued on page 21...

... continued from page 20



1. *Mystery of Life*
2. *Children's Amusement Park*
3. *A model of the solar system*
4. *One of the museum's interactive displays.*

CFP Photos



Helix of Life

On the museum's south end, rising from the building's basement to the ceiling, is the sculpture Helix of Life. At 47 meters high and 6.4 meters around, it is one of the center's most eye-catching pieces and apparently the world's biggest indoor sculpture.

The sculpture consists of 17 pairs of men and women, hands linked, arranged in the shape of a DNA helix. It is a reminder that DNA is the most basic structure of all life on Earth.

Dinosaur fossils

On the second floor is a hall filled with dinosaur fossils unearthed in China – and expectedly, a hit among children. Three sculptures of dinosaur skeletons stand in the middle of the hall, welcoming visitors to their “home.” On the walls are pictures, fossils and video presentations that talk about dinosaurs’ habitats. Two dinosaur balloons float under remote control along the hall’s corridors.

Wheel of Time

Wheel of Time, a display on the north side of the third floor, shows the complicated internal structure of a clock through a transparent cover.

“It reminds us how precious time is,” Shao Jie, the museum’s assistant director, said. “It can also teach our kids how to tell time.”

3D cinema

The museum has another record-making feature: the world’s biggest 3D cinema, with a screen that is 22 meters high and 29.58 meters wide. The hall can accommodate 600 people and has seats for the disabled. It also has a six-speaker stereo system.

Touch music

The Palace of Science on the first floor features a Music Wall made up of colorful tiles that play musical notes. Visitors can record their compositions into a built-in recorder, then play them afterwards. The most popular pieces heard here are “Edelweiss,” “The Alphabet Song” and “Happy Birthday to You.”

China Science and Technology Museum

Where: 5 Beicheng Dong Lu, Chaoyang District
Open: Daily except Monday, 9 am – 4:30 pm
Tel: 5904 1000; 5904 1010

Admission

General Admission: 30 yuan; 20 yuan for students
Children's Amusement Park: 20 yuan for children; 10 yuan for adult companions

3D cinema: 30 yuan; 20 yuan for students

Getting there: Take Subway Line 8 to Olympic Green Park station, then walk east for 10 minutes; take Subway Line 5 to Datun Dong station, then take Bus 538 to Beicheng Dong Lu.

Alternatively, visitors can take bus 328, 379, 419, 628, 751 or 913 to Wali Nan and go on foot for another five minutes; take bus 425, 518, 630, 836 or 949 to Baofang and head west for another 10 minutes; take 466, 653, 758, 984 or 985 to Huizhong Bei Li, and walk west for another 10 minutes; take Bus 108, 124, 415, 417, 426, 538 or 803 to Datun Nan and walk north for another 10 minutes.



Dining

Satisfy your appetite

If you are a spicy food connoisseur, VIC will definitely be your number one choice. Renowned chef Paul Zhang from Sofitel Chengdu will pamper you with authentic Sichuan cuisine that encompasses different cooking techniques and a rich variety of flavors. Chef's recommendations are twice-cooked pork, authentic Sichuan spicy chicken and fish fillets in hot chili oil. Moreover, there is a perfect balance of color, smell, flavor, shape and nutrition, each dish presented with the finest appearance, aroma and taste.



Where: VIC, Sofitel Wanda Beijing, 93 Jianguo Lu, Chaoyang District

When: October 26 – November 1

Tel: 8599 6666

Hawaii night

China World Hotel will present Hawaii Night, an evening celebrating the aloha spirit from the beautiful islands of Hawaii. The evening will begin with a cocktail reception followed by an elegant gourmet gala dinner and performances from the islands' most celebrated musical artists, who will be flying in especially for the occasion.

Where: Conference Hall, China World Hotel, 1 Jianguomen Wai Dajie, Chaoyang District

When: October 19

Cost: 11,880 yuan per table of 10 persons (Premier Circle tables); 8,880 yuan per table of 10 persons (Deluxe tables)

Tel: 6505 5838

Catch Me If You Can Crab Dinner Buffet

Discover a festival of senses and aroma with fresh delicacies from the deep blue sea with the special Catch Me If You Can Crab Dinner Buffet. Chef de Cuisine



Ricardo Bizzaro proudly presents a variety of Macanese-style crab delights that evoke a refreshing palate of flavors, such as curry crab in Macanese style served with saffron and cinnamon rice and cumin; and turmeric curry crab served with saffron and cinnamon rice, papadums and mango chutney.

Where: Vasco's, Hilton Beijing Wangfujing, 8 Wangfujing Dong Jie, Dongcheng District

When: From September 10, 5:30-9:30 pm

Cost: 188 yuan, subject to 15 percent service charge
Tel: 5812 8888 ext. 8411

Classic Taiwanese dishes

Celebrate Taiwan style at CBD International Cuisine, where resident Taiwanese chef Wen will prepare time-honored classic Taiwanese dishes in the Asian section of CBD for buffet lunch and dinner. Signature dishes include Taiwanese beef noodle soup, assorted meatball broth, street-style crispy chicken marinated with sea salt and braised pork over rice bento style.

Where: CBD International Cuisine and Grand Millennium Beijing, 7 Dongsanhuan Zhong Lu, Chaoyang District

When: Until September 30

Cost: 126 yuan (lunch buffet); 176 yuan (dinner buffet)
Tel: 6530 9383



Event

Hua Fu Ceremony



NE • TIGER, occupying a unique position as a leading Chinese luxury brand, specially trims a store-window display of Hua Fu (Chinese national dress) collection at Beijing Image Store, located in New Oriental Plaza, aimed at presenting the spirit of Chinese traditional culture to the world. To salute the 60th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China, NE • TIGER attempts to blend traditional and modern designing ideas, dressing its window with an original and unique visual angle.

HOTPOT

Frustrated by the sea of sameness found in most nightclubs in Beijing, DJ Wordy (three-time China DMC Champion) and DJ Lomang (NYC/Ghostface Killah's China Tour DJ) make it their monthly mission to bring in some freshness. With special international guest DJs from Paris, Germany, Japan, NYC and San Francisco, HOTPOT is already known as the top-choice refuge for non-commercial club music in Beijing. Expect anything from Golden Era hip-hop to funk and soul to rock n' roll to New Wave to house and electro; HOTPOT is Beijing's No. 1 world-class party for music lovers with world-class booty.

Where: Punk, The Village, 11 Sanlitun Lu, Chaoyang District

When: October 9
Tel: 6410 5240

Hotel



Swiss meeting package

Swissotel Beijing presents the Swiss meeting package, which includes full-day use of a meeting room and lunch rooms; international buffet lunch; audio-visual equipment including PA system, lectern, overhead projector and screen; choice of meeting room set up with stationery and mineral water served throughout the day; dedicated Swiss Meeting Specialist, who will be assigned to help plan, coordinate and assist you during every stage of the event to ensure everything runs smoothly and professionally.

Where: Swissotel Beijing, 2 Chaoyangmen Bei Dajie, Chaoyang District

When: September – December
Cost: 450 yuan per person (minimum of 30 persons)
Tel: 6553 2288 ext. 2263

Chef appointment

Food and beverage veteran Mario Cittadini has been appointed Chef de Cuisine of Daccapo Italian Restaurant and Bar and Grill of the Regent Beijing. An Italian national, Cittadini is the owner of Il Postale, the one-Michelin-star restaurant, and has been head chef here for the past seven years and is equipped with excellent culinary and organizational skills. With Cittadini on board at the Regent Beijing, Chinese gourmet will be enhanced with the most exciting and delicious delicacies.



Lifestyle package

Enjoy a special rate for Hilton Beijing's Lifestyle package, which includes stay in an Executive Deluxe, where you will enjoy acclaimed Hilton Serenity beds and ergonomically designed furniture, as well as a Bose CD player, espresso machine, DVD player and a second LCD TV in the bathroom; an all-day bravo performance at the Executive Lounge, inclusive buffet breakfast, all-day snacks and drinks, evening cocktails and hors d'oeuvres; and one complimentary massage treatment at the spa.

Where: Hilton Beijing, 1 Dongfang Lu, Changyang District

When: Until December 31
Cost: 1,700 yuan, subject to 15 percent surcharge; upgrade to Executive Suite for an additional 200 yuan
Tel: 5865 5225

Aviation

New British Airways promotion

Customers who book British Airways' award-winning Club World business class can enjoy a free upgrade to first class on one leg of their journey to Europe from either Shanghai or Beijing. Customers must book before midnight on October 16 and travel between September 16 and March 31, 2010 to take advantage of the free upgrade offer. In Beijing, the first-class cabin is available until September 27 and will be offered again from October 27, enabling more customers from China the chance to experience British Airways' globally unparalleled comfort and service.

When: Before October 16



Fabulous Singapore Stopover package

The Fabulous Singapore Stopover package is back by popular demand. It promises to deliver fantastic deals and great discounts for visitors to explore the sunny island of Singapore.

Singapore Airlines, together with the Singapore Tourism Board and Changi Airport Group, is once again offering customers the chance to stay in Singapore for just \$1 as part of STB's 2009 Reasons to Enjoy Singapore global marketing campaign. The \$1 package comprises exclusive deals on hotel accommodation, airport transfers and entry to some of Singapore's most popular tourist attractions.

(By Sun Feng)

Chinglish story

This column focuses on Chinglish mistakes in our daily life. If you have any experiences to share, send them to Wang Yu at wangyu2008@ynet.com.

Never borrow a rubber in class

By Huang Daohen

Americans are known for their "corruption" of Standard English, the pronunciation in particular, and for liberally peppering their conversations with slang.

Many Chinese people who are learning English imitate US speakers: they like slipping in an American slang or two into their sentences. They try to use expressions they have heard on TV, in movies or in novels. When they meet up with native English speakers, they like to show off how immersed they are in Western culture.

Sadly, their honest mistakes sometimes alienate rather than endear them to foreigners. My friend Dennis Zhao, who just got back from the US, recently shared with me one of his most embarrassing encounters of this kind.

Zhao, 27, was a visiting scholar at a Michigan high school for two years. During his stay, he also taught Chinese to a class of American students.

Once, during a quiz, Zhao noticed that one of his students had messed up his test paper with pencil scribbles of Chinese characters and did not have an eraser.

Zhao was a stickler for neatness and told the boy, "I'll get you a rubber."

Zhao said this in a low voice, but the students who were quietly concentrating on their work apparently heard, because the whole room burst into laughter.

Zhao had no idea what just happened. "I thought it was a kind gesture to offer him a block of rubber."



What's funny about that?" he asked himself.

After class, Zhao went directly to the faculty room and told an American teacher what just occurred. His story was met with laughter. Afterward, his colleague told him that "rubber," a British term for an eraser, meant a condom in the US!

"What a joke! I still feel embarrassed whenever I think of this," Zhao said, but he added that Chinese teachers should learn from his experience. For decades, the word "rubber" in Chinese textbooks meant "eraser." One can still find this definition in Kingsoft, a digital translation tool used by most Chinese students.

Zhao mentioned another example of a difference in UK and US English: the piece of clothing that Americans call "pants," Chinese students were taught for decades to call "trousers." One Chinese student told Zhao that "trousers" is the word his grandparents recognize.

Chinglish on the way

This column aims to identify Chinglish in public areas. If you see any Chinglish signs, please send a picture of it to wangyu2008@ynet.com with your name and address.

Skipping rape

By Tiffany Tan

This sign is not all that bad; "skipping rape" actually sounds like an anti-rape kit.

On second thought, the image of a child and the word "rape" should never ever have to be associated. This is one of the heartrending, sad realities of our world.

But the sign has nothing to do with violence against children; on the contrary, it promotes fun for kids. If you have not already guessed it, it is a label for a brand of "skipping rope," or *tiaosheng*. And it is no ordinary skipping rope: the packaging says it is a "high quality skipping rope series."

Now if only the manufacturers can fix the quality of their labels, then they have a chance of becoming truly world-class toy manufacturers. Until then, I do not think they will be swamped with orders from overseas markets.

**Blacklist**

This is a column of words or phrases commonly misused by Chinese speakers. If you're planning to be an English teacher, reporter or employee of a multinational company, then watch out for this page each week.

1. The story may be a shocker to new couples.

Professor Zhu Shida (ZS): Some people might think that it should be "shock" instead of "shocker." "Shock" means a sudden and violent shake, blow or crash. It also means the effect of such a shake, blow or crash. For instance, we experienced culture shock when we first stepped on American soil. The lifestyle was so different from what we were used to in China. So, it was a shock. However, people do use the word "shocker" to modify a highly sensational written work, especially a story: That young man loves to read shockers. In slang, "shocker" means a person or a thing that shocks: You never know what he will do next – a real shocker, isn't he? So, the sentence is all right with "shock" or "shocker." With the latter, you may have a sense of vulgarity.

Native speaker Steven Sandor

(SS): While it may somewhat casual to use shocker this way, one can reasonably expect most people to understand either shocker or shock in this context.

2. Clothing stores set up shop in front of the temple.

ZS: As we know, there is an idiomatic expression of "set up shop" in English. It means "to start work or business": Every morning the fruit and vegetable man sets up shop at the corner. It also means "to start a business": He set up shop in the fur trade. The problem for the sentence we cite here is that the subject should advisably be persons that start a business. As "stores" and "shop" are of the nature and the same endeavor, rhetorically it does not sound very nice and logical. If we change it to: "Men set up shop in the clothing business in front of the temple" or "Clothing stores start a brisk business in front of the temple," it would be much better.

SS: The idea of inanimate objects like stores walking around and setting up other stores is a cute one, if amusing. But the professor is right. The existing examples are fine. "Merchants set up clothing shops in front of the temple" would also work.

3. The couple had to separate to grant their family wishes.

ZS: When "grant" is a transitive verb, it means "to give, allow": to grant a request, to grant permission. So, the writer here has misused the word. I think he actually wishes to say: The couple had to separate to conform to their family wishes. Or: The couple had to separate in conformity with their family wishes. We may quote here Henry Buckle: They granted charters to the towns and privileges to the inhabitants. However, the verb "to grant" does have a sense of agreeing or consenting when it is used as an intransitive verb. We have a Shakespearean verse at hand to denote its usage: The soldiers should have toss'd me on their pikes/Before I would have granted to that act. In this sense, if we change the sentence into: "The couple had to separate to grant to their family wishes," it would be all right.

SS: While I agree that this sentence sounds a little strange, "to grant a wish" has become a very common phrase in English. When genies pop out of a lamp, they say they will grant three wishes. A monkey's paw grants five wishes. The Grant a Wish Foundation might be a little dismayed to be told they should be the Conform to Someone's Wishes Foundation.

This issue could be avoided by speaking more directly: The family pressured the couple into separating.

Movie of the Week

As a so-called sci-fi movie, this British film won't teach you the science behind time traveling; as a comedy, however, it is excellent. It is a typical British comedy, with funny and – in a sense – stupid characters who are out to solve a serious problem. Actor Chris O'Dowd induces bigger laughs in the TV series *The IT Crowd*, but he is more than adequate in *FAQ About Time Travel* playing a social outcast attempting to solve the problem of time travel with black humor.

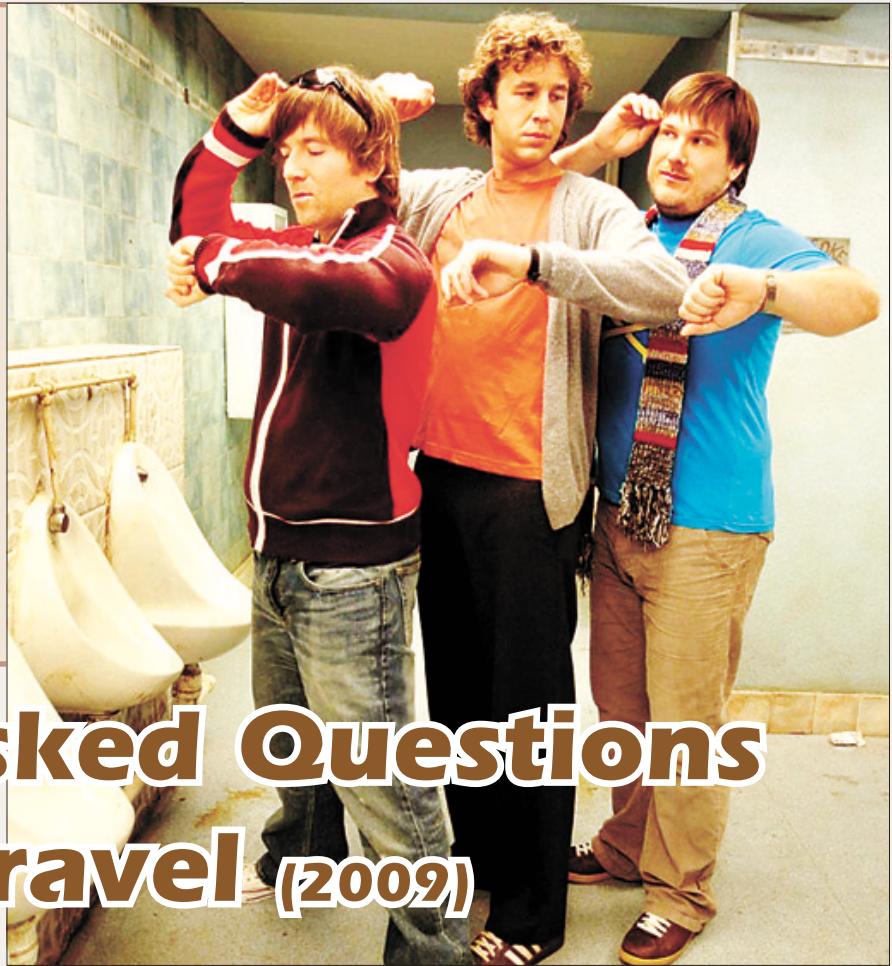
The acting isn't the greatest. Neither are the special effects. Despite this, the movie has a good enough plot to keep moviegoers interested.

Synopsis

Three men – two geeks and a cynic – walk into a bar. They are three ordinary blokes who all have dreams and hopes for an exciting and better future. They are stuck in boring jobs with no prospects. They are frustrated with life, which on the whole looks uneventful.

They are about to sit down and have an average night out in their local pub, where they'll put down a few beers, tell a few jokes with a bit of banter and set the world right. There is no reason to suspect anything unusual is going to happen.

But when they meet time travelers from the future who claim to have fixed the problem with time, the three friends suddenly find themselves in the middle of a timeless conundrum.



Frequently Asked Questions About Time Travel (2009)

Scene 1

(Ray gets fired from his job at an amusement park and goes to have a drink with his colleagues, Toby and Pete. The conversation begins with Toby writing a letter to Hollywood.)

Toby (T): "Dear Hollywood, please stop making so many crappy movies. Here are a few tips to help you out. One: story is king. Always has been, always will be."

Pete (P): This is eating into (1) our drinking time.

T: OK. Er, "Remakes, Jude Law ... Han shot first. More *Firefly* or *Serenity*. The end." Well, that's Hollywood sorted.

P: Shall we move on to the Middle East?

T: Pen's running out.

Ray (R): Oh, always the way (2).

P: Nerds (3)!

R: Hey! Didn't we all agree to stop using the "N" word?

P: I didn't agree to anything.

T: "Nerd" is the word they use to keep us down.

R: You should use the term "imaginer."

P: That's the nerdiest thing I've ever heard!

R: You are just threatened. You're threatened because you don't understand our world.

P: What's to understand? I saw one *Star Trek* film. I hated it, never looked back.

T: Really? Which one?

P: The first one with the big, gold robot and the little, fat mate.

R: You mean *Star Wars*, don't you?

P: Do I? Aren't they the same thing?

Scene 2

(Ray meets Cassie, the time traveler from the future, but he does not believe her story. However, after experiencing time disorientation in the form of a time leak while visiting the toilet, he goes to Cassie for help.)

R: Cassie! Cassie!

Cassie (C): Ray, I really have to go.

Vocabulary

- eat into:** take time away from; in this case, drinking
- always the way:** always like this
- nerd:** a person who is single-minded or accomplished in scientific or technical pursuits but is considered socially inept
- gents:** a men's public bathroom
- sorted:** resolved
- anachronous:** belonging to another time, outside the proper historic or chronological order
- probation:** in this case, detention – a period in which a person's functions are suspended

(By Wang Yu)

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